

# **CONNECTICUT NUTRITION STANDARDS**

## **for Foods in Schools**

**School Year 2015-16**  
**(Effective July 1, 2015)**

**Complying with  
Healthy Food Certification  
Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes**

**June 2015**



Connecticut State Department of Education  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education  
25 Industrial Park Road  
Middletown, CT 06457

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# CONNECTICUT NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR FOODS IN SCHOOLS

Connecticut State Department of Education • June 2015

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cns2015.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cns2015.pdf)

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## About this Document

The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Connecticut Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools* provides detailed information on the CNS for school year 2015-16, including implementation guidance and the rationale for development of each standard. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) are consistent with current science-based national nutrition recommendations and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Smart Snacks nutrition standards for competitive foods in the interim final rule, *National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School*.

As of this document's publication date (June 2015), the USDA has not released the final rule for competitive foods in schools. The CNS may be subject to change, pending the USDA's release of the Smart Snacks final rule. The state nutrition standards committee will review the CNS when the USDA publishes the final rule, and make revisions as needed.

The mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations does not imply approval or endorsement by the CSDE or the USDA. Product names are used solely for clarification.

For additional information on the CNS, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) and [Healthy Food Certification](#) Web pages or contact:

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\* Denotes individuals who served on the original committee to develop the Connecticut Nutrition Standards in 2006.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

AHA	American Heart Association
BMI	body mass index
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	Connecticut General Statutes
CN	Child Nutrition
CNS	Connecticut Nutrition Standards
CNP	Child Nutrition Programs
CSDE	Connecticut State Department of Education
DGAC	Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee
DRI	Dietary Reference Intake
DV	Daily Value
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
HFC	Healthy Food Certification
HHFKA	Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
HUSSC	HealthierUS School Challenge
IOM	Institute of Medicine, National Academies of Science
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
PFS	product formulation statement
RDA	Recommended Dietary Allowance
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SMP	Special Milk Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

# 1 — Introduction

[Section 10-215e](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) required the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to publish a set of nutrition standards by August 1, 2006, for all foods offered for sale to students at school separately from school meals that are reimbursable under the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). The CSDE developed the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) in July 2006, with input from a state nutrition standards committee that included representation from the following organizations:

- American Academy of Pediatrics (Hezekiah Beardsley Connecticut Chapter);
- American Heart Association;
- Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics;
- Connecticut Action for Healthy Kids;
- School Nutrition Association of Connecticut;
- Connecticut State Department of Education;
- Connecticut State Department of Public Health;
- End Hunger Connecticut! Inc., New England Dairy & Food Council; and
- University of Connecticut, Department of Nutritional Sciences.

For additional information on the state statutes, see the appendix.

## CNS PHILOSOPHY

The CNS promotes healthier choices for students in schools. The standards focus on:

- moderating calories;
- limiting total fat, saturated fat, sodium and added sugars;
- eliminating trans fat; and
- promoting increased consumption of nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats and legumes.

The nutrients addressed in the CNS are based on current nutrition science and national health recommendations from the 2010 [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) and national health organizations such as the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine (IOM), American Heart Association, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and American Academy of Pediatrics.

The CNS does not address nutrients or food ingredients that lack scientific consensus regarding negative health effects, and are therefore not currently addressed by national health recommendations. Some examples include high fructose corn syrup, food additives and artificial colors. However, the CSDE strongly encourages schools to read product labels and choose foods without these types of ingredients. In general, products with fewer ingredients are healthier choices. The CSDE’s Better Choice Recommendations assist schools with identifying products that do not contain these ingredients. For more information, see “[Better Choice Recommendations](#)” in this section.

## FORTIFICATION AND SUPPLEMENTATION

The CNS promotes the consumption of needed nutrients through naturally nutrient-rich healthy food choices, not through fortified products that would otherwise have little nutritional value. Naturally nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats and legumes provide substantial amounts of naturally occurring vitamins, minerals and other nutrients with relatively few calories. Foods and beverages that are not nutrient rich supply calories, but relatively small amounts of nutrients (and sometimes none at all), unless fortified. Examples of products that are not naturally nutrient rich include “energy” bars and baked goods (e.g., doughnuts and muffins) fortified with multiple vitamins, minerals and nutrition supplements.

The CNS does not allow any significantly fortified products for use in schools unless they are naturally nutrient-rich products that are fortified with nutrients at levels based on **scientifically documented** health needs, such as:

- milk fortified with vitamins A and D;
- breakfast cereals fortified with iron;
- orange juice fortified with calcium,
- soy beverages fortified with calcium; and
- grain products fortified with folic acid.

A basic premise of the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* is that Americans should meet their nutrient needs primarily by consuming nutrient-rich foods. Fortified foods and beverages are advantageous only if they provide additional sources of certain nutrients that might otherwise be present only in low amounts in some food source, provide nutrients in highly bioavailable forms or address a documented public health need. Manufacturers often fortify nutrient-poor foods and beverages with a variety of vitamins and minerals that do not meet any of these criteria. These products do not provide the same health benefits as naturally nutrient-rich foods that contain these nutrients.

Significantly fortified foods and beverages could possibly lead to a nutrient excess with toxic effects, if students are consuming too much of a product or consuming multiple sources of different fortified products. Currently, there are no scientifically documented health needs or recommendations for children to have additional fortification of nutrients through these types of products.

The CNS does not approve food or beverage products that contain nutrition supplements such as amino acids (e.g., taurine, glutamine, lysine and arginine), extracts (e.g., green tea extract and gotu kola extract) and herbs or other botanicals (e.g., ginseng and ginkgo biloba). Their efficacy and safety for consumption by children is not well known, and some nutrition supplements may have harmful side effects.

Without scientific proof of established health benefit and certification of safety for use with children by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and national health organizations, products that are significantly fortified or contain nutrition supplements do not merit inclusion on the CSDE’s *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages*, regardless of whether their nutrient content complies with the CNS or the state beverage statute.

## REVISION REQUIREMENTS

C.G.S. [Section 10-215e](#) requires the CSDE to publish the state nutrition standards by January 1 of each year, to be effective for the next school year (July 1 through June 30). Nutrition science is continually evolving. The CSDE annually reconvenes the state nutrition standards committee to evaluate and revise the CNS as needed, based on changes in nutrition science, national health recommendations and federal regulations. The most current version of the CNS is available on the CSDE's [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) Web page.

## RATIONALE FOR CURRENT REVISIONS – SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16

The state nutrition standards committee did not make any changes to the CNS for school year 2015-16. Effective with the previous school year (2014-15), the committee made many revisions to align the CNS with the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards for competitive foods, except when doing so would weaken the integrity of the current CNS or be inconsistent with state statutes. The Smart Snacks standards for foods are less restrictive than the CNS in several areas. For a comparison of the federal and state nutrition standards, see the CSDE's comparison chart, [Comparison Chart of USDA Smart Snacks and Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#).

The committee felt that any additional changes to the CNS should wait until the USDA publishes the Smart Snacks final rule, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and USDA release the 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

The standards in this document are effective **July 1, 2015**. Schools that follow the CNS will exceed the federal Smart Snacks nutrition standards in the USDA interim final rule for competitive foods.



## LIST OF ACCEPTABLE FOODS AND BEVERAGES

The CSDE's *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* is a brand-specific list of commercial food products that meet the CNS and beverages that meet the requirements of state statute. This list assists school districts with identifying foods and beverages that comply with the state requirements. These products also meet the Smart Snacks standards.

The CSDE strongly recommends that districts use the *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* to identify products that comply with the state statutes for foods and beverages. This helps districts meet all state requirements and provide the necessary documentation to the CSDE to demonstrate compliance with the state statutes. Due to the often-complicated process of evaluating purchased foods for compliance with the CNS, the CSDE strongly encourages schools to submit food products to the CSDE for review, instead of evaluating them locally. For more information, see “[Information Needed for Product Evaluation](#)” in this section.

The CSDE updates the list regularly to include new products and remove discontinued products. Connecticut school nutrition programs receive e-mail notifications when updates are made.

### Providing Naturally Nutrient-rich Foods and Beverages

The CSDE's *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* includes only packaged convenience food and beverage items. Minimally processed naturally nutrient-rich foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables will always meet the CNS, but are not included in the CSDE's list unless they are **individually packaged**.

It is important to note that foods that comply with the CNS can vary greatly in their nutritional value. While the foods on the CSDE's list are healthier alternatives to traditional snack foods, they are not necessarily the best choices nutritionally. For example, baked chips are better than regular chips because they are lower in fat, but they still do not provide any significant nutritional value. Many processed products that meet the standards for fat, sugars and sodium still lack the naturally occurring variety of nutrients found in whole foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and whole grains. For example:

- granola bars made with 50 percent whole grains and 50 percent enriched grains are lower in fiber and nutrients than granola bars made with 100 percent whole grains;
- 100 percent fruit juice and frozen 100 percent fruit juice bars do not contain the fiber, vitamins and minerals found in whole fruits; and
- oven-baked french fries provides less fiber, fewer nutrients and more calories than baked potatoes.



Schools can use the CSDE's list to identify packaged convenience products that are healthier choices, such as whole-grain snacks that are naturally high in fiber and nutrients. The [Better Choice Recommendations](#) also assist schools in choosing healthier products. **The CSDE strongly encourages schools to ensure that a la carte food choices also include a variety of minimally processed and whole foods that are naturally nutrient rich, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats and legumes.** This will provide an optimal selection of healthy food choices for students.

## Better Choice Recommendations

The Better Choice Recommendations are additional recommendations beyond the specific requirements of the CNS. They are not required but help schools to identify foods that are even better choices. Foods that meet these recommendations are often less processed and contain fewer ingredients.

The Better Choice Recommendations vary depending on the food category, but generally include the following:

- no artificial flavors or colors;
- no high fructose corn syrup;
- at least 2.5 grams of fiber (a “good” source of fiber as defined by the FDA); and
- 100 percent whole grain (only for products containing grains).

The CSDE strongly encourages schools to choose foods that meet these recommendations. The Better Choice Recommendations are included in the green and white columns on the right of the CSDE’s [\*List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages\*](#).

## Information Needed for Product Evaluation

The CSDE reviews commercial products for compliance with the CNS. Schools and manufacturers can submit product information at any time. Required information includes:

- name of manufacturer;
- name of product;
- flavor or variety;
- package size;
- nutrition facts label (must include calories, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugars, sodium and fiber);
- list of ingredients (must be in a format that can be electronically copied); and
- product code, including the UPC code for the individual package (i.e., 0-00000-00000-0) and case (i.e., 000-00000-00000-0) or the manufacturer product code if the product does not have a UPC code.

For frozen dessert products such as ice cream and frozen yogurt, the serving size information must list the weight equivalent (grams) in addition to the serving size volume. Product weight is required to determine whether the product complies with the standard for percentage of total sugars by weight. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [\*Submitting Food and Beverage Products for Approval\*](#).



## HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION

Effective July 1, 2006, C.G.S. [Section 10-215f](#) requires that each board of education or governing authority for all public schools participating in the NSLP must certify annually to the CSDE whether they will comply with the CNS for all foods sold to students on school premises separately from reimbursable school meals. “**School premises**” include all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the local or regional board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system or the governing authority district or school.

The CNS applies to all competitive foods offered for sale to students at all times, in all schools and from all sources, such as cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers.

“**Sale**” means the exchange of foods or beverages for a determined amount of money or its equivalent, including tickets, coupons, tokens and similar items. This includes any activities that suggest a student donation in exchange for foods and beverages.



Table 1-1 shows examples of potential sources of food sales to students in HFC public schools. This list is not all-inclusive.

Table 1-1. Potential Sources of Food Sales in Public Schools*	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adult education programs operated by the board of education</li> <li>■ Afterschool enrichment programs that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of foods</li> <li>■ Cafeteria a la carte sales</li> <li>■ Classroom parties that collect a fee to cover the cost of foods provided to students</li> <li>■ Clubs and organizations that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of foods</li> <li>■ Culinary arts programs**</li> <li>■ Family and consumer sciences classes**</li> <li>■ Family resource centers**</li> <li>■ Fundraisers conducted by school groups and non-school groups</li> <li>■ Programs and meetings that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recipient schools that elect to participate in HFC under interschool agreements</li> <li>■ School stores, kiosks and other school-based enterprises</li> <li>■ Seamless Summer Food Programs and Summer Food Service Programs operated by the board of education (only if foods are sold a la carte)**</li> <li>■ Sports programs that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of foods</li> <li>■ Summer school programs (e.g., enrichment or exploratory) operated by the board of education</li> <li>■ USDA Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)</li> <li>■ Vending machines</li> <li>■ Any other programs, organizations and activities selling foods to students</li> </ul>
<p>* The CNS applies to foods <b>sold</b> to students <b>separately</b> from reimbursable meals.</p> <p>** The CNS does not apply if foods are <b>given</b> to students free of any charge (including the exchange of tickets, coupons, tokens and similar items) or contribution, such as suggested donations.</p>	

HFC districts receive an additional 10 cents per lunch based on the total number of reimbursable lunches (paid, free and reduced) served in the district in the prior school year.



## Food Exemptions

Foods that do not comply with the CNS can only be sold to students on school premises if the local board of education or school governing authority has voted to allow food exemptions as part of the annual HFC Statement, and the foods are sold at the location of an event held after the school day or on the weekend, but not from vending machines or school stores.

- The “**school day**” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. For example, if the school day ends at 3:00 p.m., foods that do not comply with the CNS can be sold at the location of an event held anytime during the period of 3:31 p.m. through 11:59 p.m.
- An “**event**” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. Table 1-2 shows additional examples of events.

**Table 1-2. Examples of Events\***

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Awards banquets</li> <li>■ Boy Scout Blue &amp; Gold Dinners</li> <li>■ Craft fairs</li> <li>■ Debate team competitions</li> <li>■ Election day (if school is not in session)</li> <li>■ Family bingo nights</li> <li>■ Field days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Math team competitions</li> <li>■ Mock trial competitions</li> <li>■ School carnivals</li> <li>■ School concerts</li> <li>■ School dances</li> <li>■ School fairs, e.g., health, science and math</li> <li>■ Silent auctions</li> <li>■ Sports banquets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sports games, tournaments and matches, e.g., basketball, football, soccer, tennis, field hockey, volleyball and cross country</li> <li>■ Talent shows</li> <li>■ Theatrical productions</li> </ul>
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\* This list is not all-inclusive. For questions regarding whether specific district fundraising activities meet the definition of “event,” contact the CSDE.

- “**Location**” means where the event is being held. For example, cupcakes can be sold at the soccer field during a soccer game, but cannot be sold in the school cafeteria while a game is played on the soccer field.



The vote to allow food exemptions is part of the district’s annual [HFC Statement](#) (Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs, ED-099) that districts must submit to the CSDE by July 1 of each year. For more information on the HFC application process, see the CSDE’s [Application Forms for Healthy Food Certification](#) Web page.

The CSDE’s [Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools](#) provides comprehensive information and guidance on complying with state and federal laws for competitive foods. For more information and resources on implementing the CNS and HFC, see the CSDE’s [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#), [Healthy Food Certification](#) and [School Foods and Beverages](#) Web pages, and the list of resources in section 9.

## STANDARDS FOR BEVERAGES

The state beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q apply to all beverages sold to students in public schools, both as part of school meals and separately from school meals. The state beverage statute applies to all public schools regardless of whether they choose the healthy food option of HFC under Section 10-215f or participate in the USDA school nutrition programs. Beverages must also comply with any stricter provisions of the Smart Snacks beverage standards.

The state beverage statute applies to all beverages offered for sale to students on school premises at all times, in all schools and from all sources, such as cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers. Table 1-3 shows examples of potential sources of beverage sales to students in public schools. This list is not all-inclusive.

**Table 1-3. Potential Sources of Beverage Sales in Public Schools\***

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adult education programs operated by the board of education</li> <li>■ Afterschool enrichment programs that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of beverages</li> <li>■ Cafeteria a la carte sales</li> <li>■ Classroom parties that collect a fee to cover the cost of beverages provided to students</li> <li>■ Clubs and organizations that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of beverages</li> <li>■ Culinary arts programs**</li> <li>■ Family and consumer sciences classes**</li> <li>■ Family resource centers**</li> <li>■ Fundraisers conducted by school groups and non-school groups</li> <li>■ Programs and meetings that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of beverages</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recipient schools under interschool agreements</li> <li>■ School meals</li> <li>■ School stores, kiosks and other school-based enterprises</li> <li>■ Seamless Summer Food Program (SSFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) operated by the board of education (only if beverages are sold separately from SSFP and SFSP meals)**</li> <li>■ Sports programs that charge students to participate and the fee includes the cost of beverages</li> <li>■ Summer school programs (e.g., enrichment or exploratory) operated by the board of education</li> <li>■ USDA Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)</li> <li>■ Vending machines</li> <li>■ Any other programs, organizations and activities selling beverages to students</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

\* The state beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q apply to **all beverage sales** in public schools (HFC and non-HFC) at any time on school premises, including beverages sold as part of school meals and separately from school meals.

\*\* The state beverage statute does not apply if beverages are **given** to students free of any charge (including the exchange of tickets, coupons, tokens and similar items) or contribution, such as suggested donations.

## Allowable Beverages

C.G.S. Section 10-221q applies to all beverages sold to students as part of school meals and separately from school meals in all public schools. This statute allows five categories of beverages to be sold to students in public schools at all times and from all sources, including, but not limited to, cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers. Portion sizes of allowable beverages cannot exceed 8 fluid ounces for elementary schools and 12 fluid ounces for middle and high schools, except for water, which is unlimited.

Table 1-4 summarizes the beverage requirements for public schools. These requirements include the stricter provisions of the state beverage statute and the Smart Snacks beverage standards.

Table 1-4. Beverages Allowed by C.G.S. Section 10-221q	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>MILK, LOW-FAT (1%) UNFLAVORED AND NONFAT FLAVORED OR UNFLAVORED</b>, with no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce and no artificial sweeteners.*</li> <li>■ <b>NONDAIRY MILK SUBSTITUTES SUCH AS SOY OR RICE MILK (FLAVORED OR UNFLAVORED)</b> that comply with the USDA nutrition standards for nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives** and contain no artificial sweeteners,* no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>100 PERCENT JUICE (FRUIT, VEGETABLE OR COMBINATION)</b>, containing no added sweeteners.*</li> <li>■ <b>BEVERAGES THAT CONTAIN ONLY WATER AND FRUIT OR VEGETABLE JUICE</b> with no added sweeteners* and that meet the requirements specified in the CSDE's handout, <a href="#">Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice</a>.</li> <li>■ <b>WATER (PLAIN OR CARBONATED)</b>, which may be flavored but contains no added sweeteners or caffeine.*</li> </ul>
<p>* Sweeteners include <b>nutritive</b> (caloric) sweeteners (e.g., sugar, sucrose, honey, fruit juice concentrate and high fructose corn syrup) and <b>nonnutritive</b> sweeteners without calories. Nonnutritive sweeteners include <b>artificial</b> sweeteners (e.g., acesulfame potassium, aspartame and sucralose), “<b>natural</b>” sweeteners such as stevia (e.g., Rebiana, Reb A, Truvia, PureVia and SweetLeaf) and <b>sugar alcohols</b> (e.g., sorbitol, mannitol, maltitol and erythritol).</p> <p>** For information on the USDA's nutrition standards for nondairy milk substitutes, see the CSDE's handout, <a href="#">Allowable Milk Substitutes for Nondisabled Children</a>.</p>	

The CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) includes brand-specific beverages that comply with all state and federal beverage requirements. For information on added sugars, sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and artificial sweeteners, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and the [Glossary](#).



## Beverage Exemptions

Beverages that do not comply with the requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q can only be sold to students in public schools if the local board of education or school governing authority has voted to allow exemptions, and the beverages are sold at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided they are not sold from vending machines or school stores.

- The “**school day**” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. For example, if the school day ends at 3:00 p.m., beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute can be sold at the location of an event held anytime during the period of 3:31 p.m. through 11:59 p.m.
- An “**event**” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. For more examples of events, see [table 1-2](#) in this section.
- “**Location**” means where the event is being held. For example, lemonade can be sold at the baseball field during a baseball game, but cannot be sold in the school cafeteria while a game is played on the baseball field.



Beverage exemptions are not part of the annual HFC Statement (ED-099 Addendum). The exemption section of the HFC Statement applies only to competitive foods. The board of education or school governing authority must vote separately to allow any sales of noncompliant beverages in the district’s schools. Sales of noncompliant beverages must meet the exemption criteria specified above.

For more information on the state beverage requirements, see the CSDE’s handout, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Schools](#), and [Beverage Requirements](#) Web page. For additional resources, see [section 6](#).

## BUY AMERICAN PROVISION

All foods sold in the USDA school nutrition programs must comply with the Buy American Provision under the federal regulations for the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR 210.21 (d)) and the School Breakfast Program (7CFR 220.16 (d)). This provision requires that schools purchase domestically grown and processed foods to the maximum extent possible. Schools must ensure that all foods purchased using funds from the nonprofit school food service account comply with the Buy American provision, including competitive foods and beverages sold a la carte. For more information, see USDA [Memo SP 20-2006](#) and USDA [Memo SP 2-2006](#), and [Questions and Answers for Buy American Provision](#).

## 2 — General Standards for All Foods

The CNS categories of competitive foods include:

- Snacks;
- Entrees Sold Only A La Carte;
- Non-entree Combination Foods;
- Fruits and Vegetables;
- Cooked Grains; and
- Soups.

To be allowed for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals, a competitive food item must meet **AT LEAST ONE** of the three general standards (see [table 2-2](#)), and **ALL** of the nutrient standards for the specific food category to which it belongs, e.g., calories, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, sodium and caffeine.

Some food categories have exemptions from the fat or sugar standards for certain nutrient-rich food items that are naturally higher in fat (such as nuts and seeds) or sugars (such as dried fruit). These foods are listed in the “Exemptions” column of each food category. All fruits and vegetables without added fat, sugar and salt are exempt from the CNS.



Foods must be evaluated for compliance with the CNS based on the amount of the food item **as served**, including any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, syrup, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in this section.

Two categories of foods and beverages are not allowed regardless of whether their nutrient content meets the CNS or the state statute for beverages. These include:

- **significantly fortified** products except for naturally nutrient-rich foods fortified with nutrients at levels based on scientifically documented health needs, e.g., milk fortified with vitamins A and D, breakfast cereals fortified with iron, orange juice fortified with calcium or grain products fortified with folic acid; and
- products containing **nutrition supplements**, e.g., amino acids, extracts, herbs or other botanicals.

For more information, see “[Fortification and Supplementation](#)” in section 1.

## PORTION SIZE

Schools purchase and prepare foods in a variety of serving or package sizes such as individual packages, single-serve portions or quantity recipes portioned into individual servings. Regardless of how foods are packaged or prepared, they must be evaluated for compliance with the CNS based on the amount of the item **as served**. The individual serving size or package cannot exceed 480 calories for entrees or 200 calories for the other five food categories (Snacks, Non-entree Combination Foods, Fruits and Vegetables, Cooked Grains and Soups).

If a package contains multiple servings, the standards apply to the nutrition information for the **entire** package. The nutrition information for the entire package is determined by multiplying the nutrients per serving (e.g., calories, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugars and sodium) by the number of servings in the package. For example, if a snack product contains 150 calories per serving and the package contains two servings, the entire package contains 300 calories. This product does not comply with the CNS because snack foods cannot contain more than 200 calories.

### Volume versus Weight

It is important to note that serving size **volume** and **weight** are not the same. “Ounces” are a measure of weight and “fluid ounces” are a measure of volume. While these terms are often used interchangeably, a measure of volume does not equate to the same measure of weight. One cup equals 8 fluid ounces (volume) but it does not necessarily weigh 8 ounces. The equivalent weight of a volume measure of any food varies depending on the **density** of the item being measured. For example, 1 cup of pudding or baked beans weighs more than 1 cup of puffed wheat cereal.





## ACCOMPANIMENTS

The CNS applies to the amount of the food item as served including any added accompaniments such as butter, margarine, oil, cream cheese, jelly, jam, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, relish, salad dressing, dipping sauces, sauces and gravy. When a food item includes an accompaniment (such as a bagel with cream cheese), the nutrition information for **both items** must be added together when reviewing the item for compliance with the CNS.

Many accompaniments are high in fats, sugars and sodium. They often contain calories but few, if any, nutrients. Schools must consider how accompaniments affect the nutrient profile of the food item. To limit negative impact, schools can compare brands and purchase products that are lowest in fat, sugars and sodium, and use portion control measures such as portion control (PC) packets.

Table 2-1 shows examples of some accompaniments typically served with foods in each CNS category.

**Table 2-1. Examples of Accompaniments Served with Foods in the CNS Categories\***

### ENTREE SOLD ONLY A LA CARTE

- Chicken nuggets with **dipping sauce**
- Hamburger or hotdog with **ketchup, mustard and relish**
- Meatloaf with **gravy**
- Quesadilla with **spicy salsa**
- Stir-fry chicken and vegetables with **duck sauce**
- Tacos with **taco sauce**
- WGR pasta and meat sauce with **grated cheese**



### SNACKS

- Oatmeal with **brown sugar**
- Pancakes, waffles or French toast with **maple syrup or fruit sauce**
- Potato chips with **dip**
- Pudding with **whipped cream**
- WGR bagel with **cream cheese**
- Whole-grain toast with **butter and jam**
- WGR muffin, cornbread and roll with **margarine or butter**
- Whole-corn nachos with **cheese sauce**

### NON-ENTREE COMBINATION FOODS

- Vegetable egg roll with **duck sauce**

### COOKED GRAINS

- Brown rice with **duck sauce**
- WGR pasta cooked with **oil, margarine or butter**
- WGR pasta with **marinara sauce**

### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Apple crisp with **whipped cream**
- Apple slices with **caramel dipping sauce**
- Carrots with **low-fat dressing**
- French fries with **ketchup**
- Salad with **low-fat dressing**
- Vegetables cooked with **oil, margarine or butter**

### SOUPS

- Black bean soup with **sour cream**
- Clam chowder with **oyster crackers**
- French onion soup with **croutons**
- Tomato soup with **grated cheese**

\* Foods are evaluated for compliance with the CNS based on the amount of the food item **as served**, including any added accompaniments.

## GENERAL STANDARDS

Competitive food items must meet at least one of the three general standards in table 2-2, and all of the nutrient standards for the specific food category to which they belong, e.g., Snacks, Entrees, Non-entree Combination Foods, Fruits and Vegetables, Cooked Grains and Soups. For information on the nutrient standards for each food category, see sections 3 through 8.

Table 2-2. CNS General Standards	
GENERAL STANDARDS	EXEMPTIONS
<p>The food item meets <b>at least one</b> of the following three criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Foods:</b> The food item is a grain product that: 1) contains <b>at least 50 percent whole grains</b> by weight or has a whole grain as the first ingredient*; 2) any remaining grain ingredients are <b>enriched</b>; and 3) any <b>noncreditable grains</b>, such as bran, germ and modified food starch, are less than two percent of the product formula. To comply with this limit, the combined total of all noncreditable grains cannot exceed 3.99 grams for groups A-G (baked goods) or 6.99 grams for groups H (cereal grains) and I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals) of the USDA <a href="#">ounce equivalents chart</a>. **</li> <li><b>Food Groups:</b> The food item has one of the following food groups as the <b>first</b> ingredient: fruits, vegetables, dairy or protein foods, e.g., meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds. If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be a fruit, vegetable, whole grain, dairy or protein food.</li> <li><b>Combination Foods:</b> The food item is a combination food that contains <b>at least ¼ cup</b> of fruit and/or vegetable.</li> </ol> <p>* If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be a whole grain.</p> <p>** For more information on the WGR requirements and noncreditable grains, see the CSDE's handout, <a href="#">Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods</a>.</p>	<p>The following foods are exempt from the general standards and all nutrient standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables</b> with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li><b>Canned fruits</b> with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li><b>Canned vegetables</b> with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>All other food products are not exempt, and must meet at least one of the general standards and all of the nutrient standards for the specific food category.</p>



## RATIONALE

Prior to school year 2014-15, the CNS did not include general standards. Effective July 1, 2014, the state nutrition standards committee added the USDA general standards and exemptions to be consistent with Smart Snacks. The committee chose to be stricter than the Smart Snacks general standards for WGR foods and nutrients of public health concern.

The Smart Snacks general standard for WGR foods requires acceptable grain products to contain 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient. This definition is inconsistent with the WGR definition for school meals under the USDA final rule, *Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs* (77 FR 4088), which updated the school meals offered under the NSLP and SBP, as required by the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (Public Law 111-296). For school meals in the NSLP and SBP, grain-based foods must comply with the three criteria below to meet the WGR definition.

1. The product must contain at least 50 percent whole grains.
2. Any other grain ingredients in the product must be enriched.
3. The combined weight of any noncreditable grains in the product, such as bran or germ, must be less than two percent of the product formula. To comply with this limit, the combined total of all noncreditable grains cannot exceed 3.99 grams for groups A-G (baked goods) or 6.99 grams for groups H (cereal grains) and I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals) of the USDA [ounce equivalents chart](#).

Since the Smart Snacks definition of acceptable grain products does not include the last two WGR criteria (enriched grains requirement and limit for noncreditable grains), it is inconsistent with the definition of WGR products for meals in the NSLP and SBP. The state nutrition standards committee believed it was important for the WGR standard for a la carte foods to be consistent with the WGR standard for foods allowed for school meals. Therefore, the committee used the same WGR definition for the CNS.

The Smart Snacks general standards include foods containing 10 percent of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern (i.e., calcium, potassium, vitamin D or dietary fiber). The USDA Smart Snacks interim final rule temporarily allows this category through June 30, 2016.

The state nutrition standards committee chose to be stricter than Smart Snacks and not include this general standard for two reasons. First, this standard would allow some foods not currently allowed by the CNS, and would therefore weaken the integrity of the CNS. Second, implementing this standard would require an extensive amount of CSDE staff time to review the thousands of currently approved products to determine whether they contain at least 10 percent of one of the allowed nutrients. Since the USDA is only allowing products to meet this standard through school year 2015-16, this would be an ineffective use of limited staffing.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

The following guidance helps schools determine whether a food meets one of the three general standards.

### General Standard 1 – WGR Foods

- For commercial products, consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#). All listed products will meet at least one general standard and all nutrient standards for the specific food category.
- For products that are not on the CSDE's list, schools must obtain a [product formulation statement](#) (PFS) from the manufacturer that documents the amount of creditable and noncreditable grains per serving. For information on the PFS requirements, see appendix I in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- For guidance on determining whether a grain is whole, enriched or noncreditable, see the CSDE's handout, [Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods](#), and section 2 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- For information on how to read a food label, see section 5 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).



### General Standard 2 – Food Groups

- For commercial products, consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#). All listed products will meet at least one general standard and all nutrient standards for the specific food category.
- For products that are not on the CSDE's list, schools must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer that documents the amount of the food group per serving. For information on the PFS requirements, see appendix I in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#). For guidance on determining whether one of the non-grain food groups (fruits, vegetables, dairy or protein foods) is the first ingredient in a product, see the food groups in [Choose MyPlate](#).
- It is important to note that there are differences between the USDA meal pattern components for school meals and the food groups of Choose MyPlate. These differences are summarized on the next page.



- **Meat/Meat Alternates:** A competitive food could meet general standard 2 because it has a protein food listed as the first ingredient (e.g., chicken, ground beef or cheese), but it might not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements for the meat/meat alternates component. To credit toward the meat/meat alternates component, schools must obtain either a [Child Nutrition \(CN\) label](#) or PFS. CN labels are only available for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls and breaded fish portions. For more information on CN labels, see appendix H in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).



While the terms protein and meat/meat alternate are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. The USDA meal pattern requirements are for a specific amount of **meat/meat alternates** not for a specific amount of **protein**, with the exception of commercial tofu and tofu products. For more information on tofu, see the CSDE's handout, "[Commercial Tofu and Tofu Products](#)."

When reviewing foods for compliance with the USDA meal patterns, menu planners cannot determine the amount of meat/meat alternates in a food by reading the product's nutrition facts label or ingredients. The grams of protein listed on a product's food label do not correspond to the ounces of meat/meat alternates contained in the product. Protein is only one component of meat/meat alternates. Meat/meat alternates contain other components such as water, fat, vitamins and minerals. Since protein is also found in varying amounts in other foods such as cereals, grains and many vegetables, protein content cannot be used as an indicator that a product meets the meat/meat alternates component. For more information, see

- **Milk:** The USDA meal patterns require a "milk" component not a "dairy component." A competitive food could meet general standard 2 because it has milk or another dairy food as the first ingredient, but it will not meet the NSLP or SBP meal pattern requirements for the milk component. For example, commercial smoothies made with milk do not meet the USDA requirements for fluid milk because they do not comply with the FDA's standard of identity for milk.



Only fluid milk credits as the milk component for reimbursable school meals. Dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt credit only as meat/meat alternates for reimbursable school meals. However, for the purposes of meeting the CNS general standards, any food from the dairy group (including milk) could be the first ingredient.

### General Standard 3 – Combination Foods with at Least $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup of Fruit/ Vegetable

- For commercial products, consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#). All listed products will meet at least one general standard and all nutrient standards for the specific food category.
- For products that are not on the CSDE's list, schools must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer that documents the amount of fruit/vegetable per serving. A CN label could indicate fruit or vegetable content if the product is a main dish entree that contributes to the meat/meat alternates component. For more information on CN labels, see appendix H in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- For school-made foods, review the standardized recipe and use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for School Meals](#) to determine if one serving contains at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fruit and/or vegetable. For more information on the [Food Buying Guide](#), see the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).



### Exemptions for Vegetables with Added Sugar

The Smart Snacks standards allow exemptions for added sugar in canned vegetables, if they contain no added ingredients except water or contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable. The Smart Snacks interim final rule does not define how much sugar constitutes “a small amount of sugar for processing purposes.” The state nutrition standards committee will review this issue for additional guidance pending the release of the USDA final rule on Smart Snacks.

### 3 — Standards for Snacks

This category includes snack foods such as chips, crackers, popcorn, rice cakes, hard pretzels, pita chips, snack mix, breakfast cereals (e.g., cold ready-to-eat cereals and cooked hot cereals such as oatmeal), trail mix, nuts and seeds, peanut butter and other nut butters, meat snacks (e.g., jerky and meat sticks), cookies, cereal bars, granola bars, bakery items (e.g., pastries, toaster pastries, muffins, waffles, pancakes, French toast, soft pretzels and rolls), frozen desserts, ice cream (including ice cream novelties), cheese, pudding, yogurt and smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt and fruits/vegetables/100 percent juice).

These standards apply to the amount of the food item **as served**, including any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, syrup, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more examples of accompaniments, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.

Snacks	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
■ No more than 200 calories as served including any added accompaniments.	None

#### RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks calorie standard. This standard meets the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) recommendations for non-entree a la carte foods (200 calories or less per portion as packaged).<sup>1</sup> The report of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) indicates that almost all portion sizes have increased over the past half-century.<sup>2</sup> The DGAC indicates that strong evidence documents a positive relationship between portion size and body weight. The habitual consumption of oversized portions is a major contributor to childhood obesity.<sup>2,3</sup> Larger portion sizes can lead to overconsumption of total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugars, sodium and calories. The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends maintaining calorie balance over time to achieve and sustain a healthy weight. One of the goals of the CNS is to encourage appropriate portion sizes that limit calories.

#### IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Serve products that meet the CNS requirements in a serving size that does not exceed 200 calories. Consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific snack products that meet the calorie standard.
- If school-made snacks are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the calorie standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see "school-made foods" in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE's [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Snacks	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	<p>The following foods are exempt from the fat standard but cannot contain chemically altered fat substitutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low-fat or reduced fat 100 percent natural cheese (including part-skim mozzarella);</li> <li>• nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters; and</li> <li>• products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sweeteners or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> </ul> <p>All other snack products are not exempt and must meet the fat standard. The fat exemption does not apply to foods containing cheese, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters and dried fruit as <b>ingredients</b>, e.g., peanut butter cookies, pecan cookies, granola bars with nuts, cranberry walnut muffin, cheese crackers, cheese sauce, peanut butter crackers and sesame seed crackers.</p>

## RATIONALE

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends limiting overall fat intake to between 25 to 35 percent of calories for children and adolescents 4 to 18 years of age.<sup>4</sup> High-fat foods add unnecessary calories to the diet. A diet lower in fat is associated with lower risk of overweight, obesity, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.<sup>5</sup>

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks total fat standard. The CNS allows exemptions for some nutrient-rich foods that are naturally high in fat, including nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters, and low-fat or reduced fat 100 percent natural cheese (including part-skim mozzarella). The majority of fat in nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters is unsaturated, which promotes cardiovascular health. Natural low-fat and reduced-fat cheese is a good source of protein and calcium.

The CNS allows an exemption for products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sweeteners (including nutritive and nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols) or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes). This exemption is consistent with the committee's previous approach to nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols, and is stricter than the Smart Snacks exemption, which only prohibits added nutritive (caloric) sweeteners. For more information, see the standard for sugars in this section and "[CNS Philosophy](#)" in section 1.

Smart Snacks does not address added versus naturally occurring fat for exempted foods. The CNS fat exemptions apply only to the naturally occurring fat in these nutrient-rich foods. If fat is added (e.g., peanuts roasted in oil, peanut butter with added oil or cheese sauce with added oil), the product is evaluated for compliance based on the amount of added fat contained.



The CNS advocates whole or minimally processed foods that are naturally nutrient rich and low in fat. Therefore, the CNS does not allow reducing fat with chemically altered fat substitutes such as Olestra, Olean and Simplese. Research has addressed the safety of moderate use of fat replacers for adults but not children.<sup>6</sup> Fat substitutes can have negative side effects. For example, Olestra can cause abdominal cramping and diarrhea, and inhibits the absorption of some vitamins and other nutrients. Simplese can cause allergic reactions in people with allergies to milk or eggs.

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any snack products containing added chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Increase the availability of snack items that are fruits, vegetables and whole grains, or minimally processed foods made from these ingredients. These foods are naturally low in fat.
- Choose snack foods that are lowest in total fat. Consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the fat content of brand-specific products.
- If snacks contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- The fat exemption for cheese applies only to 100 percent natural (real) cheese, pasteurized blended cheese and cottage cheese, as defined by the FDA's standards of identity.<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the definitions for “natural cheese” and “pasteurized blended cheese” in the [Glossary](#). The fat exemption does not apply to full-fat cheese or foods that contain cheese as an **ingredient**, such as pasteurized process cheese (e.g., American), pasteurized process cheese food, pasteurized process cheese spread, pasteurized process cheese product, cheese sauces or cheese crackers. These foods must meet the specific fat standard for the “Snacks” category.
- Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters often contain added saturated fat, e.g., peanuts roasted in oil or peanut butter made with partially hydrogenated soybean oil. Check the ingredients list and choose nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters without added saturated fat. Product that contain partially hydrogenated oils do not meet the trans fat standard. For more information, see “[Trans Fat](#)” in this section.



- The exemption for the naturally occurring fat in nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters does not apply to any **added** fat in these foods. Nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters with added fat are evaluated for compliance based on the amount of added fat contained. The manufacturer must provide information regarding the amount of naturally occurring versus added fat in a serving. The fat exemption does not apply to packaged snacks containing these foods as an **ingredient**, e.g., peanut butter cookies, pecan cookies, granola bars with nuts, cranberry walnut muffin, cheese crackers, cheese sauce, peanut butter crackers and sesame seed crackers. These foods must meet the specific fat standard for the “Snacks” category. Note: Combination snack foods such as peanut butter with carrot sticks are evaluated under the “Non-entree Combination Foods” category (see [section 5](#)).
- If school-made snacks are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the snack’s standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Snacks	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<p>■ Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</p>	<p>The following foods are exempt from the standard for saturated fat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low-fat or reduced fat 100 percent natural cheese (including part-skim mozzarella);</li> <li>• nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters; and</li> <li>• products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sweeteners or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> </ul> <p>The saturated fat exemption does not apply to packaged snacks containing these foods as an <b>ingredient</b>, e.g., peanut butter cookies, pecan cookies, granola bars with nuts, cranberry walnut muffin, cheese crackers, cheese sauce, peanut butter crackers and sesame seed crackers.</p>

## RATIONALE

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends limiting saturated fat intake to less than 10 percent of total calories, with most fats consumed from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, e.g., fish, nuts and vegetable oils.<sup>4</sup> Foods that are high in saturated fat increase the risk of coronary artery disease by raising blood cholesterol.

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. The standard allows exemptions for some nutrient-rich foods that are naturally high in saturated fat, including nuts, seeds, nut or seed butters and low-fat or reduced fat 100 percent natural cheese. The majority of fat in nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters is unsaturated, which promotes cardiovascular health. Natural low-fat and reduced-fat cheese is a good source of protein and calcium.



To be consistent with the USDA interim final rule, the state nutrition standards committee added an exemption for products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sweeteners (including nutritive and nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols) or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes). This exemption is consistent with the committee's previous approach to nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols and is stricter than the USDA exemption, which only prohibits added nutritive (caloric) sweeteners. For more information, see the standard for sugars in this section and "[CNS Philosophy](#)" in section 1.

The USDA interim final rule does not address added versus naturally occurring saturated fat for exempted foods. The CNS saturated fat exemptions apply only to any naturally occurring saturated fat in these nutrient-rich foods. If saturated fat is added (e.g., peanuts roasted in oil, peanut butter with added oil or cheese sauce with added oil), the product must be evaluated for compliance based on the amount of added saturated fat contained.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Increase the availability of snack items that are fruits, vegetables and whole grains or minimally processed snacks made from these ingredients. These foods are naturally low in saturated fat.
- Choose snack foods that are lowest in saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the saturated fat content of brand-specific products. Major food sources of saturated fat in the “Snacks” category include ice cream, sherbet, frozen yogurt, cakes, cookies, quick breads, doughnuts, potato chips, corn chips and popcorn.
- If snacks contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- The saturated fat exemption for cheese applies only to 100 percent natural (real) cheese, pasteurized blended cheese and cottage cheese, as defined by the FDA’s standards of identity.<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the definitions for “natural cheese” and “pasteurized blended cheese” in the [Glossary](#). The fat exemption does not apply to full-fat cheese or foods that contain cheese as an ingredient, such as pasteurized process cheese (e.g., American), pasteurized process cheese food, pasteurized process cheese spread, pasteurized process cheese product, cheese sauces or cheese crackers. These foods must meet the specific saturated fat standard for the “Snacks” category.
- Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters often contain added saturated fat, e.g., peanuts roasted in oil or peanut butter made with partially hydrogenated soybean oil. Check the ingredients list and choose nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters without added saturated fat. Product that contain partially hydrogenated oils do not meet the trans fat standard. For more information, see “[Trans Fat](#)” in this section.
- The saturated fat exemption does not apply to packaged snacks containing nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters as an **ingredient**, e.g., peanut butter cookies, pecan cookies, granola bars with nuts, cranberry walnut muffin, cheese crackers, cheese sauce, peanut butter crackers and sesame seed crackers. These foods must meet the specific saturated fat standard for the “Snacks” category. *Note: Combination snack foods such as peanut butter with carrot sticks are evaluated under the “Non-entree Combination Foods” category (see [section 5](#)).*
- If school-made snacks are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for saturated fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) Web page.



Snacks	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Effective with school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), the CNS trans fat standard is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. The committee published the 2015-16 trans fat standard in the CNS for school year 2014-15 to provide a 1 ½-year notice for industry.

The current FDA labeling regulations allow foods to contain artificial trans fat even if the label states “0 grams.” Food labels can state “0 grams” of trans fat if the serving contains less than 0.5 gram of trans fat and no claims are made about fat, fatty acid or cholesterol. <sup>9</sup>

In November 2013, the FDA announced a proposal ([Federal Register Vol.78, No. 217](#)) to remove partially hydrogenated oils from the “generally recognized as safe” list and therefore eliminate most trans fats from the food supply. <sup>10</sup> The FDA recognizes that the current level of trans fat intake remains a significant public health concern. The state nutrition standards committee feels strongly that trans fat should be eliminated in schools because there is no safe level of artificial trans fat consumption. The FDA is expected to finalize the trans fat ban in June 2015, and phase it in over the next several years.

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends keeping trans fat consumption as low as possible. <sup>4</sup> Trans fats increase the risk of coronary artery disease by raising low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and lowering high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol. Since the partial hydrogenation of vegetable oils accounts for more than 80 percent of the total intake of trans fat in the diet, the elimination of processed foods with partially hydrogenated oils will significantly lower children’s trans fat intake.

This standard addresses only **artificial** trans fat, not the naturally occurring trans fat in foods such as dairy products and meats. Animal products contain only naturally occurring trans fat unless they are processed with hydrogenated oils. The state nutrition standards committee recognizes that eliminating naturally occurring trans fat from the diet is unnecessarily restrictive because it would require the elimination of nutrient-rich foods from children’s diets, such as dairy products and meats.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for all commercial products to ensure that they do not contain any partially hydrogenated oils. For information on how to read a food label, see section 5 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Most artificial trans fats are found in vegetable shortenings, some margarines, crackers, cookies, snack foods, fried foods, baked goods and other processed foods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.
- If school-made snacks are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the snack's standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the for trans fat standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see "school-made foods" in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE's [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Snacks	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight and no more than 15 grams of total sugars as served including any added accompaniments.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Smoothies:</b> No more than 4 grams of total sugars per ounce for smoothies made with low-fat yogurt and/or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit and/or 100 percent juice. The portion size is limited to no more than 8 fluid ounces for elementary schools and 12 fluid ounces for middle and high schools.</li> <li>• <b>Yogurt and Pudding:</b> No more than 4 grams of total sugars per ounce.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	<p>The following foods are exempt from the sugars standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sweeteners (including artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols) or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Frozen desserts containing only 100 percent juice and/or fruit and no added sweeteners (including artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols).</li> </ul> <p>All other snack products are not exempt and must meet the standard for sugars.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for sugar has not changed since the last update of the CNS, and is stricter than Smart Snacks. To maintain the integrity of the previous CNS, the state nutrition standards committee kept the standard for gram limits because “35 percent of total sugars by weight” alone does not provide sufficient restriction of sugar content for snack foods. Since the snack items in this category are typically not nutrient-rich, maintaining the standard of “no more than 15 grams of total sugars” eliminates foods that are high in added sugars.



For yogurt, pudding and smoothies, the committee kept the previous standard of “grams per ounce” instead of adopting the USDA interim final rule standard of “percent by weight” because Connecticut’s standard is stricter. In addition, the “percent by weight” standard is difficult to apply to snack foods such as smoothies whose serving size is based on **volume** (e.g., fluid ounces) not weight. For more information, see “[Volume versus Weight](#)” in section 2.

The state nutrition standards committee did not adopt the USDA interim final rule standard of “percent by weight” for pudding and yogurt because it does not provide any appreciable restriction of sugar content for dense foods by weight, and would weaken the integrity of the previous CNS.

The USDA interim final rule standard of no more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight allows up to 9.9 grams of sugars per ounce. (One ounce is equivalent to 28.35 grams. Thirty-five percent of 28.35 grams equals 9.9 grams.)

Table 3-1 shows some examples of these calculations for different serving sizes of yogurt. For example, with the Smart Snack standards, 6 ounces (170 grams) of yogurt could contain 59.5 grams (14.9 teaspoons) of total sugars. This is two and a half times the limit allowed by Connecticut's current standard of no more than 4 grams per ounce, which limits total sugars to 24 grams (6 teaspoons) in a 6-ounce serving of yogurt.

Plain yogurt contains about 2.2 grams of naturally occurring sugars per ounce (13.2 grams in 6 ounces). <sup>11</sup> The Smart Snacks standard allows 46.3 grams of **added** sugars (11.6 teaspoons) in a 6-ounce serving of yogurt. (Total sugars of 59.5 grams minus naturally occurring sugars of 13.2 grams equals 46.3 grams of added sugars.) This is more than three times the amount of added sugars allowed by the Connecticut standard of “no more than 4 grams of total sugars per ounce,” which limits added sugars to 10.8 grams in a 6-ounce serving. (Total sugars of 24 grams minus naturally occurring sugars of 13.2 grams equals 10.8 grams of added sugars.)

Table 3-1. Examples of Sugar Limits for Yogurt with Smart Snacks and CNS						
Serving Size of Yogurt	FEDERAL STANDARD		STATE STANDARD		Additional Amount of Total Sugars Allowed by Federal Standards	
	No more than 35 percent by weight		No more than 4 grams per ounce			
	Grams	Teaspoons *	Grams	Teaspoons *	Grams	Teaspoons *
2 ounces (56.7 grams)	19.8	5.0	8	2	11.8	3.0
4 ounces (113.4 grams)	39.7	9.9	16	4	23.7	5.9
6 ounces (170.1 grams)	59.5	14.9	24	6	35.5	8.9
8 ounces (226.8 grams)	79.4	19.8	32	8	47.4	11.8
* Approximate teaspoons based on 4 grams of sugars per teaspoon.						

The committee kept the previous standard prohibiting nonnutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural) and sugar alcohols because it is stricter than the USDA interim final rule standard and supports the philosophy of the CNS (see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1). The CNS advocate whole or minimally processed foods that are naturally nutrient rich and low in added sugars. Therefore, the CNS do not allow reducing sugars through the use of any nonnutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural) or sugar alcohols.

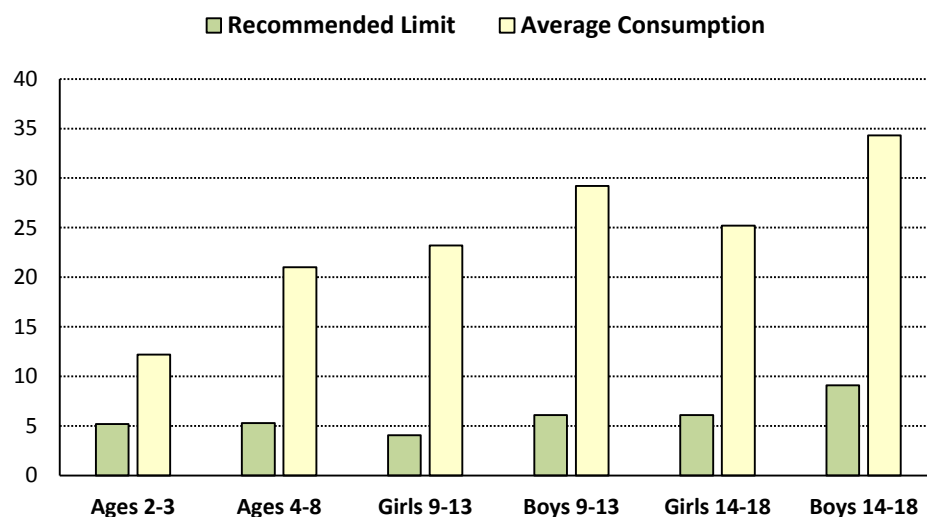
Children need to learn to enjoy the natural favors of healthy foods that have not been artificially enhanced with a sweet taste. There is little evidence on the long-term health effects of nonnutritive sweeteners, particularly from exposure initiated in childhood. <sup>1</sup> Evidence of the effectiveness of nonnutritive sweeteners in promoting weight loss is inconclusive. Some research suggests that nonnutritive sweeteners can increase cravings for sweet foods and lead to increased calorie consumption.



The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends reducing calories from added sugars by choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners.<sup>4</sup> Many foods that contain added sugars provide few or no essential nutrients and no dietary fiber. However, foods that are naturally high in sugars such as fruits and milk should not be restricted because they provide nutrients and other healthful components. Both naturally occurring sugars and added sugars increase the risk of dental caries.

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends limits for added sugars based on the recognized health risks of a diet high in added sugars, such as increased risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, metabolic abnormalities (e.g., increased triglycerides) and adverse health conditions such as increased inflammation and oxidative stress.<sup>12</sup> The AHA recommended limits for added sugars depend on an individual's calorie level, but most children far exceed these recommendations (see table 3-2). For example, the recommended limit for children ages 4 to 8 is about 5 ¼ teaspoons of added sugars per day, but average daily consumption is four times as much (21 teaspoons).

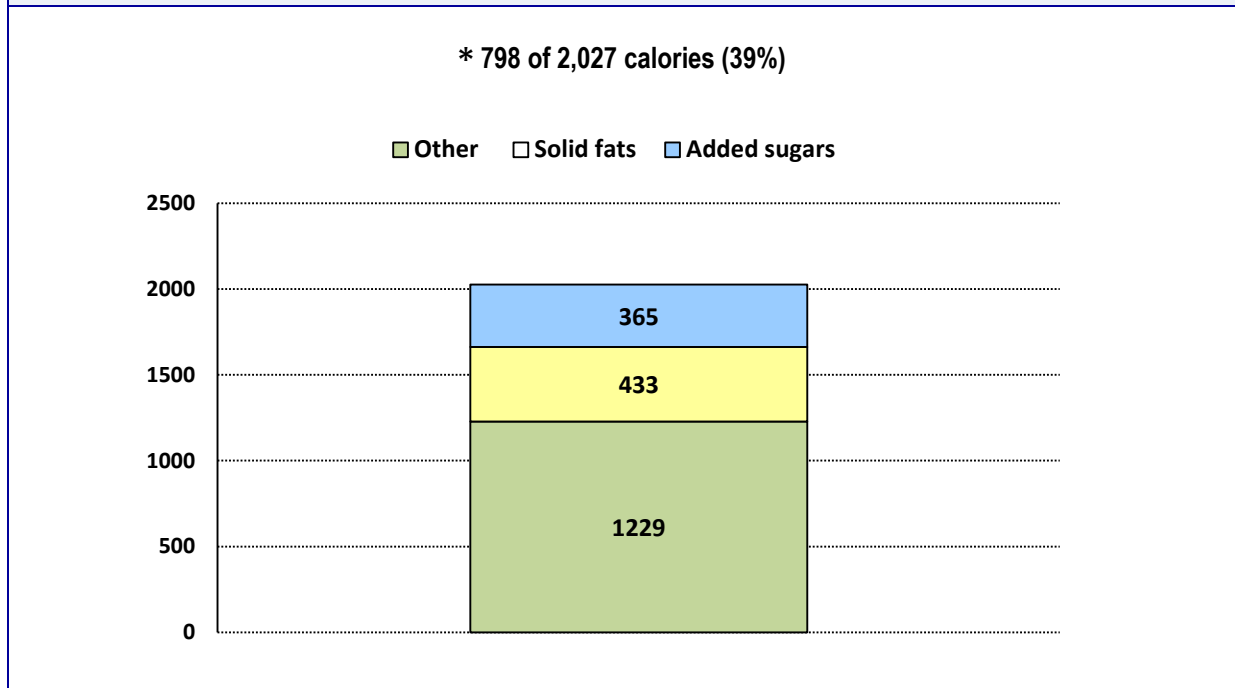
**Table 3-2. Recommended versus Actual Daily Consumption of Added Sugars (Teaspoons)**



Johnson, R.K. et al. on behalf of the American Heart Association Nutrition Committee of the Council on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Metabolism and the Council on Epidemiology and Prevention. (2009). Dietary sugars intake and cardiovascular health: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*, 120:1011-1020. <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/CIRCULATIONAHA.109.192627>

A study in the October 2010 *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* found that children consume almost 40 percent of their total daily calories from empty calories, with 433 calories from solid fats and 365 calories from added sugars (see table 3-3).<sup>13</sup> Children's calorie consumption far exceeds the discretionary calorie allowance specified by [Choose MyPlate](#) for all gender and age groups. Grain-based desserts are the top source of calories.

**Table 3-3. Contribution of Solids Fats and Added Sugars to Children's Average Daily Calories \***



Reedy, J., & Krebs-Smith, S.M.(2010). Dietary Sources of Energy, Solid Fats, and Added Sugars among Children and Adolescents in the United States. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 110(10):1477-1484.



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose snack foods that are lowest in sugars. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sugar content of brand-specific products. For more information on reducing sugars, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Read labels and choose foods without added sugars. The Nutrition Facts label lists total sugars but does not differentiate between those that are added or naturally occurring. The ingredients statement indicates whether sugars are added. A food is likely to be high in added sugars if they appear first or second in the ingredients list or if several sugars are listed. For more information, see table 3-4 below and “added sugars” in the [Glossary](#).

**Table 3-4. Common Sugars and Sweeteners**

ADDED SUGARS		ARTIFICIAL AND NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENERS *		
		Common Artificial Sweeteners	Sugar Alcohols	“Natural” Nonnutritive Sweeteners **
Brown rice syrup Brown sugar Corn sweetener Corn syrup Corn syrup solids Dextrin Dextrose Fructose Fruit juice concentrate Glucose High-fructose corn syrup Honey	Invert sugar Lactose Malt syrup Maltose Molasses Maple syrup Nectars, e.g., peach nectar, pear nectar Raw sugar Sorghum syrup Sucrose Syrup	Acesulfame Potassium (Acesulfame-K, Sunett, Sweet & Safe, Sweet One) Aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal) Neotame Saccharin (Sweet and Low, Sweet Twin, Sweet ‘N Low Brown, Necta Sweet) Sucralose (Splenda) Tagatose	Erythritol Isomalt Lactitol Maltitol Mannitol Sorbitol Xylitol Hydrogenated starch hydrolysates (e.g., hydrogenated glucose syrups, maltitol syrups and sorbitol syrups)	Stevia (Rebiana, Rebaudioside A, Truvia, PureVia, SweetLeaf)
<p>* The CNS does not allow foods that contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. Choose nutrient-dense foods that are naturally low in sugars.</p> <p>** The term “natural” does not have any consistent meaning when used to describe foods or beverages. It has not been defined by the FDA.</p>				

- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see table 3-4 above and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made snacks are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

- **Yogurt:** Flavored yogurt cannot contain more than 4 grams of total sugars per ounce. Acceptable products contain no more than:
  - 9 grams total sugars in 2.25 ounces;
  - 16 grams of total sugars in 4 ounces;
  - 24 grams of total sugars in 6 ounces; and
  - 32 grams of total sugars in 8 ounces.



Yogurts labeled “light” or “lite” typically contain nonnutritive sweeteners. Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain these ingredients. For more information, [see table 3-4](#) on the previous page and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).

- **Smoothies:** Smoothies include foods made with low-fat yogurt and fruits/vegetables/100 percent juice, such as low-fat yogurt and fruit smoothies or soy yogurt and fruit juice smoothies. The portion size of smoothies is limited to no more than 8 fluid ounces for elementary schools and 12 fluid ounces for middle and high schools. Smoothies cannot contain more than 4 grams of total sugars per fluid ounce. Acceptable products contain no more than:



- 16 grams of total sugars in 4 fluid ounces;
- 32 grams of total sugars in 8 fluid ounces;
- 40 grams of total sugars in 10 fluid ounces; and
- 48 grams of total sugars in 12 fluid ounces.

- **Pudding:** Pudding cannot contain more than 4 grams of total sugars per ounce. Acceptable products contain no more than 16 grams of total sugars in 4 ounces.



Snacks	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 230 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ Effective July 1, 2016, no more than 200 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

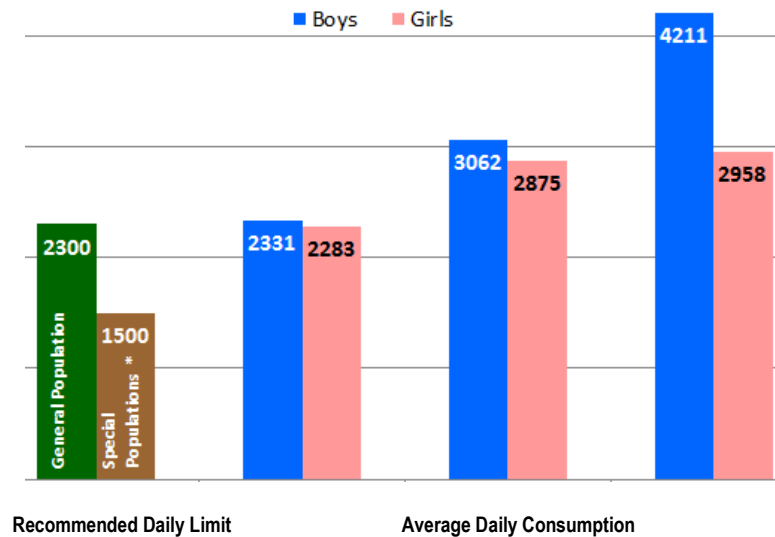
The standard for sodium has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks sodium standard. The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends limiting daily sodium intake to 2,300 milligrams, due to the strong association between sodium intake and high blood pressure.<sup>4</sup> For special populations such as African Americans and people with hypertension, diabetes or chronic kidney disease, the recommended daily limit is no more than 1,500 milligrams.

On average, Americans consume between 3,000 to 3,600 milligrams of sodium per day.<sup>14</sup> A high sodium intake increases the risk of high blood pressure in individuals who are sodium sensitive. One-third of adults have high blood pressure.<sup>15</sup> Keeping blood pressure in the normal range reduces the risk of heart disease, congestive heart failure and kidney disease.

Most children consume too much sodium. Table 3-5 shows children's recommended and average daily sodium consumption. For both boys and girls, all ages significantly exceed the recommended daily sodium limit. As children get older, they consume more sodium. Boys and girls ages 6-11 and adolescent girls consume about one-third more sodium than the recommended limit. Adolescent boys consume almost double the recommended limit.



Table 3-5. Children's Recommended and Average Daily Sodium Intake



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. What We Eat in America, NHANES 2009-2010.  
[http://seprl.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/12355000/pdf/0910/Table\\_1\\_NIN\\_GEN\\_09.pdf](http://seprl.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/12355000/pdf/0910/Table_1_NIN_GEN_09.pdf)

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose snack foods that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE's *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* for the sodium content of brand-specific products. For more information on reducing sodium, see section 5 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.
- Eliminate or reduce sodium added to school-made snacks. If school-made foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, *Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS*. For more information, see "school-made foods" in the Glossary and the CSDE's *Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS* Web page.

Snacks	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is stricter than the Smart Snacks caffeine standard. The Smart Snacks standards prohibit caffeinated foods and beverages for elementary and middle students, but allows them for high school students. The CNS prohibits caffeine in all foods and beverages for all grades.

This standard is consistent with the IOM nutrition standards that foods and beverages are caffeine free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.<sup>1</sup> The state nutrition standards committee agrees with the IOM recommendations and rationale for caffeine. The committee does not support offering products with significant amounts of caffeine for school-age children because of the potential for adverse effects, including physical dependency and withdrawal.

Some foods and beverages contain trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine and related substances. Examples include chocolate chip cookies and coffee yogurt. These foods are allowed if the product otherwise complies with the CNS.

Connecticut's beverage statute prohibits all caffeinated beverages and therefore supersedes the federal requirements. For more information, see "[Standards for Beverages](#)" in section 1. The beverage requirements apply to all public schools regardless of whether the district implements HFC.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the caffeine standard.
- Read the ingredients statement for processed snacks to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.



## 4 — Standards for Entrees

The CNS entree definition includes three categories of **main dish** food items:

1. a combination food of **meat/meat alternate and WGR food**, e.g., breakfast egg sandwich on whole-wheat English muffin, turkey wrap on whole-wheat tortilla, pizza with WGR crust, hamburger on whole-grain bun and bean burrito with whole-corn tortilla;
2. a combination food of **vegetable/fruit and meat/meat alternate**, e.g., chef's salad with turkey, cheese and hard-boiled egg, fruit and cheese platter, yogurt and fruit parfait, school-made yogurt and fruit/vegetable smoothies (breakfast only), baked potato with chili and chicken vegetable stir-fry; and
3. a **meat/meat alternate alone** (e.g., sausage patty, hard-boiled egg, grilled chicken), excluding yogurt, cheese, nuts and seeds, nut and seed butters, and meat snacks, e.g., beef jerky and meat sticks.

Foods defined by the menu planner as entrees for the NSLP or SBP might not meet the definition for entrees under the CNS. For example, a menu planner might feature French toast and pancakes as the “entree” for lunch but these foods are **not** considered entrees under the CNS because they do not meet the entree definition. These foods are “baked items” in the “Snacks” category and must be evaluated using the nutrition standards in [section 3](#).

**Table 4-1. Examples of Entrees**

### Combination Food of Meat/Meat Alternate and WGR Food



### Combination Food of Vegetable/Fruit and Meat/Meat Alternate



### Meat/Meat Alternate Alone\*



\* The category of “meat/meat alternate alone” does not include yogurt, cheese, nuts and seeds, nut and seed butters and meat snacks e.g., jerky and meat sticks. These foods are in the “Snacks” category.





## ENTREE EXEMPTION

The entree standards differentiate between 1) entree items sold a la carte on the same day that they are planned as part of a reimbursable school meal; and 2) entree items that are sold only as a la carte items and are not planned as part of a reimbursable school meal. The standards for entrees apply only to **entree items that are sold only a la carte**, i.e., entrees that are not part of a reimbursable meal.

Entree items that are sold a la carte on the **same day** that they are planned and served as part of a reimbursable school meal are exempt from all nutrient standards if they:

- are the same or smaller portion size as the NSLP and SBP;
- have the same accompaniments (see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2);
- meet the trans fat standard; and
- do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or chemically altered fat substitutes.

Table 4-2 shows when the CNS apply to entree items.

Table 4-2. Application of CNS to Entrees	
EXEMPT FROM CNS	CNS APPLY
<p><b>Sold as Part of Reimbursable Meals and A La Carte on the Same Day</b></p> 	<p><b>Sold Only A La Carte</b></p> 

The exemption applies only to **entrees that are sold a la carte on the same day** that they are planned and sold as part of a reimbursable meal. It does not apply to any other meal items that are sold a la carte such as fruits, vegetables, soups, breads, rice and pasta. All other food items sold separately from the meal are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards. For example:

- french fries that are part of a reimbursable meal can only be sold a la carte if they meet the nutrition standards for the “Fruits and Vegetables” category (see [section 6](#));
- tossed salad with dressing that is part of a reimbursable meal can only be sold a la carte if it meets the nutrition standards for the “Fruits and Vegetables” category (see [section 6](#));
- muffins that are part of a reimbursable meal can only be sold a la carte if they meet the nutrition standards for the “Snacks” category (see [section 3](#)); and
- cookies that are part of a reimbursable meal can only be sold a la carte if they meet the nutrition standards for the “Snacks” category (see [section 3](#)).

## OVERALL RATIONALE FOR ENTREES

The entree definition of “a combination food of vegetable/fruit and meat/meat alternate” now includes school-made yogurt and fruit parfaits for both breakfast and lunch, and school-made yogurt and fruit smoothies at breakfast only. These changes are consistent with the USDA entree exemptions under the interim final rule for competitive foods.



The committee kept the previous exemption provision for entree items sold a la carte on the **same day** that they are planned and served as part of a USDA reimbursable school meal. The committee did not adopt the interim final rule’s exemption provision for entrees sold both “on the day of service or the day after service” because this would weaken the integrity of the current CNS and is more difficult to monitor. The CNS exemption provision ensures that any leftover entrees served the next day are part of reimbursable meals. This is consistent with the goal of encouraging students to choose a reimbursable meal instead of a single entree item.

The state nutrition standards committee originally developed the entree exemption because they felt it was not necessary to develop a separate set of nutrition standards for entree items that are already addressed by the standards for reimbursable school meals. Meals served in the NSLP and SBP are planned to meet the USDA’s dietary specifications (nutrient standards) for reimbursable school meals. The dietary specifications set limits for calories, saturated fat, trans fat and sodium. Menu planners have selected the entrees for reimbursable school meals to meet the USDA’s dietary specifications based on the weekly school menu. A la carte sales of these items are secondary to the sale of the planned meal. The USDA interim final rule has also adopted this approach. For more information on the USDA’s nutrient standards for school meals, see the CSDE’s [\*Menu Planning Guide for School Meals\*](#).

Restricting calories and portion size to be the same as comparable entree items ensures that reasonable portions are provided. The habitual consumption of oversized portions is a major contributor to childhood obesity. <sup>2</sup> Larger portion sizes can lead to overconsumption of total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugars, sodium and calories. One of the goals of the CNS is to encourage appropriate calories.

## OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE FOR ENTREES

- Read product labels and specifications and purchase entree items that are lower in total fat, saturated fat, added sugars and sodium.
- Serve entree items containing whole grains (e.g., whole-grain breads, whole-grain pasta and whole brown rice) and naturally fiber-rich foods (e.g., vegetables, legumes and fruits) most often. These foods are naturally low in fat.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made entrees. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.
- If entrees contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- Prepare entrees with flavorful herbs and spices instead of condiments. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.
- If condiments and other accompaniments are used with entrees, serve low-fat, low-sugar and low-sodium versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Set a la carte prices that encourage students to choose the reimbursable meal instead of a single entree item, i.e., the cost of purchasing individual a la carte items is greater than the cost of purchasing the complete reimbursable meal.



## Entrees Sold Only A La Carte

This category includes all commercial and school-made main dish entree items that meet the **entree definition** and are **sold only a la carte**, i.e., entree items that are **not** planned and served as part of a reimbursable school meal on the same day. For more information, see tables 4-1 and 4-2.

These standards apply to the amount of the entree item **as served** including any added accompaniments such as butter, oil, cream cheese, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more examples of accompaniments, see table 2-1 in section 2.

Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 350 calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

### RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks calorie standard. For information on the rationale for limiting calories, see the previously indicated rationale under “calories” in [section 3](#).

### IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Serve entrees that meet all requirements of the CNS in a serving size that does not exceed 350 calories. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the calorie standard.
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for calories. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	<p>The following foods are exempt from the fat standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seafood with no added fat (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> </ul>

## RATIONALE

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks total fat standard. For information on the rationale for limiting total fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Total Fat” in [section 3](#).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any entree products containing chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with these ingredients. For more information, see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1.

The state nutrition standards committee originally developed the fat standard to encourage schools to plan and sell all entree items as part of reimbursable meals. Setting a limit on percent of calories from fat means that schools cannot sell higher fat entrees a la carte unless they are also part of a reimbursable meal that meets the USDA’s nutrient standards. When entree items are combined with low-fat or fat-free milk, fruits, vegetables and whole grains, the overall meal can meet the Dietary Guidelines.



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase entrees that are lower in fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the standards for the “Entrees” category.
- Serve entree items containing whole grains (e.g., whole-grain breads, whole-grain pasta and whole brown rice) and naturally fiber-rich foods (e.g., vegetables, legumes and fruits) most often. These foods are naturally low in fat.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques and prepare school-made entrees with flavorful herbs and spices. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If entrees contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If condiments and other accompaniments are used with entrees, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that cooked grains do not contain chemically altered fat substitutes. For more information, see “chemically altered fat substitutes” in the Glossary.
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the fat standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks saturated fat standard. For information on the rationale for limiting saturated fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Saturated Fat” in [section 3](#).

The state nutrition standards committee originally developed the saturated fat standard to encourage schools to plan and sell all entree items as part of reimbursable meals. Setting a limit on percent of calories from saturated fat means that schools cannot sell high saturated fat entrees a la carte unless they are also part of a reimbursable meal that meets the USDA’s nutrient standards. When entree items are combined with low-fat or fat-free milk, fruits, vegetables and whole grains, the overall meal can meet the Dietary Guidelines.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase entrees that are lower in saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the saturated fat standard for the “Entrees” category.
- Serve entree items containing whole grains (e.g., whole-grain breads, whole-grain pasta and whole brown rice) and naturally fiber-rich foods (e.g., vegetables, legumes and fruits) most often. These foods are naturally low in saturated fat.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques and prepare school-made entrees with flavorful herbs and spices. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If entrees contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If condiments and other accompaniments are used with entrees, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for saturated fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.





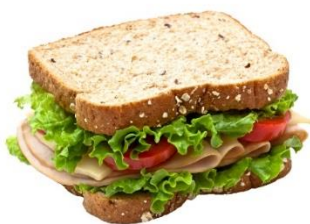
Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Effective with school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), it is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. For information on the rationale for eliminating trans fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Trans Fat” in [section 3](#).

There is no exemption for trans fats for entrees sold only a la carte because the dietary specifications for school meals require that all nutrition labels or manufacturer specifications for foods and ingredients used in the NSLP and SBP must indicate zero grams of trans fats per serving.

This standard addresses only artificial trans fats, not the naturally occurring trans fat in foods such as beef, lamb and dairy products made with whole milk. Animal products contain only naturally occurring trans fat unless they are processed with partially hydrogenated oils.



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for all commercial products to ensure that they do not contain any partially hydrogenated oils.
- If trans fat is listed on the nutrition facts panel of a product containing meat or dairy, schools must obtain documentation from the manufacturer such as a product formulation statement (PFS) that indicates the amount and source of the trans fat (both naturally occurring and artificial). For more information on PFS, see appendix I in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made entrees. Eliminate added sources of trans fat when cooking such as vegetable shortening and margarines that contain partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for trans fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE's [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight and no more than 15 grams of total sugars as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The sugar standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with Smart Snacks. The standard includes gram limits in addition to “percent by weight,” because “percent by weight” alone does not provide any appreciable restriction of sugar content for dense foods like entrees. Using only the USDA’s “percent by weight” standard would weaken the integrity of the CNS.

The Smart Snacks standard of no more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight allows up to 9.9 grams of sugars per ounce. (One ounce is equivalent to 28.35 grams. Thirty-five percent of 28.35 grams equals 9.9 grams.) [Table 3](#) shows some examples of these calculations for different serving sizes of entrees.

For example, a 4-ounce entree (113.4 grams) could contain 39.7 grams (9.9 teaspoons) of total sugars. This is almost three times the amount of total sugars allowed by Connecticut’s standard of no more than 15 grams per entree. Since entrees are typically low in added sugars, most products will not reach these levels. The standard of “no more than 15 grams” ensures that high-sugar entree products are not used.

Table 4-3. Examples of Total Sugar Limits for Entrees with Smart Snacks and CNS						
Serving Size of Entree Item	FEDERAL STANDARD		STATE STANDARD		Additional Amount of Total Sugars Allowed by Federal Standards	
	No more than 35 percent by weight		No more than 35 percent by weight and 15 grams of total sugars			
	Grams	Teaspoons *	Grams	Teaspoons *	Grams	Teaspoons *
1 ounce (28.35 grams)	9.9	2.5	9.9	2.5	0.0	0
2 ounces (56.7 grams)	19.8	5.0	15.0	3.8	4.8	1.2
3 ounces (85.1 grams)	29.8	7.4	15.0	3.8	14.8	3.7
4 ounces (113.4 grams)	39.7	9.9	15.0	3.8	24.7	6.2
* The approximate number of teaspoons is based on the conversion factor of 4 grams of sugars per teaspoon.						

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose prepared entree products that are lowest in sugars. Consult the CSDE’s *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* for the sugar content of brand-specific products.
- Read labels and choose entrees without added sugars. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that entrees do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and the [Glossary](#).
- Prepare school-made entrees without added sugars.
- Provide low-sugar alternatives to condiments, dressings and sauces. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2. Check the ingredients statement of “low” or “reduced” sugar accompaniments to ensure that they do not contain nonnutritive sweeteners.
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, *Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS*. For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 480 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for sodium has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks sodium standard. For information on the rationale for limiting sodium, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sodium” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose prepared entree products that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sodium content of brand-specific products.
- Eliminate or reduce sodium added to school-made entrees. Use salt-free seasonings such as herbs and spices. For more information on reducing sodium, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Eliminate saltshakers and salt packets from the serving line.
- Use entrees containing fresh and frozen vegetables. If canned vegetables are used, select no sodium or low-sodium varieties.
- Provide low-sodium alternatives to condiments, dressings and sauces. For more information, see [“Accompaniments”](#) in section 2.
- If school-made entrees are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Entrees Sold Only A La Carte	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is stricter than the Smart Snacks caffeine standard. Smart Snacks prohibits caffeinated foods and beverages for elementary and middle students, but allows them for high school students. The CNS prohibit caffeine in all foods and beverages for all grades. For information on the rationale for limiting caffeine, see the previously indicated rationale under “Caffeine” in [section 3](#).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any entree products containing added caffeine. However, the committee kept the previous standard prohibiting caffeine to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for processed entrees to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.
- Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the entree standards.



## 5 — Standards for Non-entree Combination Foods

This category includes nutrient-rich combination foods that are not entrees, such as WGR vegetable egg rolls, carrot sticks with peanut butter and vegetables with hummus dip. Foods in these categories either:

- do not meet the main dish criteria for entrees; or
- do not provide the minimum meal pattern requirements for meat/meat alternates and grains together or meat/meat alternates alone.



These standards apply to the amount of the food item **as served** including any added accompaniments such as butter, oil, sour cream, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more examples of accompaniments, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.

**Note:** Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds are evaluated with the standards for the “Snacks” category (see [section 3](#)).

Non-entree Combination Foods	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 200 calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

### RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the calorie standard for all other non-entree categories in the CNS and Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting calories, see the previously indicated rationale under “Calories” in [section 3](#).

### IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Serve non-entree combination foods that meet all requirements of the CNS in a serving size that does not exceed 200 calories. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the calorie standard.
- If school-made non-entree combination foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the calorie standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Non-entree Combination Foods	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the total fat standard for all other non-entree categories in the CNS and Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Total Fat” in [section 3](#).

The state nutrition standards committee kept the previous standard prohibiting artificial fat replacers because it is stricter than Smart Snacks, and supports the philosophy of the CNS (see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any combination foods containing added chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial non-entree combination products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Increase the availability of non-entree combination foods made with fruits, vegetables and whole grains. These foods are naturally low in fat.
- Choose non-entree combination foods that are lowest in fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the fat content of brand-specific products.
- If accompaniments (e.g., condiments) are used, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that non-entree combination foods do not contain chemically altered fat substitutes. For more information, see “chemically altered fat substitutes” in the Glossary.
- If school-made non-entree combination foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the fat standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Non-entree Combination Foods	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the saturated fat standard for all other non-entree categories in the CNS and Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting saturated fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Saturated Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Increase the availability of non-entree combination foods made with fruits, vegetables and whole grains. These foods are naturally low in saturated fat.
- Choose non-entree combination foods that are lowest in saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the saturated fat content of brand-specific products.
- Choose nut and seed butters without partially hydrogenated oils, e.g., peanut butter that does not contain partially hydrogenated soybean oil. Nonhydrogenated nut butters, such as all natural peanut butter or almond butter, will have no trans fat, minimal saturated fat and will provide healthy unsaturated fat.
- All nut and seed butters must be completely trans fat free, i.e., the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils. Read the ingredients statement to identify whether a product contains partially hydrogenated oils.
- If school-made non-entree combination foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for saturated fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Non-entree Combination Foods	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Effective with school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), the CNS trans fat standard is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. For information on the rationale for eliminating trans fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Trans Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- All non-entree combination foods must be completely trans fat free, i.e., the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils. Read the ingredients statement to identify whether a product contains partially hydrogenated oils.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made non-entree combination foods. Eliminate added sources of trans fat when cooking such as vegetable shortening and margarines that contain partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If school-made non-entree combination foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for trans fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Non-entree Combination Foods	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for sugars has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the standard for sugars for the “Fruits and Vegetables” category of the CNS and Smart Snacks. The committee applied only the “percent by weight” standards to this category because the foods in this category, such as fruit and yogurt parfaits, are nutrient-dense foods whose components alone meet the standard for sugars but would not meet them together if the limit of “no more than 15 gram of total sugars” were applied. Using the standard of “percent by weight” for sugars allows schools to serve healthy foods, such as fruits that are naturally high in sugars, in combination with other foods that contain some added sugars such as flavored yogurt.

The standard prohibiting artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols is consistent with the standard for all other non-entree categories in the CNS, and is stricter than Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sugars” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose non-entree combination foods that are lowest in sugars. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sugar content of brand-specific products. For more information on reducing sugars, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Read labels and choose foods without added sugars. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 2 and “added sugars” in the [Glossary](#).
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made non-entree combination foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Non-entree Combination Foods	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 230 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ Effective July 1, 2016, no more than 200 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for sodium has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the sodium standard for all other non-entree categories in the CNS and Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting sodium, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sodium” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose foods that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sodium content of brand-specific products.
- Eliminate or reduce sodium added to school-made non-entree combination foods. Use salt-free seasonings instead such as herbs and spices. For more information on reducing sodium, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If school-made foods are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Non-entree Combination Foods	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the caffeine standard for all other categories in the CNS and Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting caffeine, see the previously indicated rationale under “Caffeine” in [section 3](#).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any non-entree combination products containing added caffeine. However, the committee kept the previous standard prohibiting caffeine to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for processed non-entree combination foods to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.
- Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the standards for non-entree combination foods.





## 6 — Standards for Fruits and Vegetables

This category includes fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits (including fruit snacks that are 100 percent fruit) and vegetables. These standards apply to the amount of the food item **as served** including any added accompaniments such as butter, oil, cream cheese, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more examples of accompaniments, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.

Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds are evaluated under the “Snacks” category (see [section 3](#)).

### OVERALL RATIONALE FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends increasing vegetable and fruit intake, and eating a variety of vegetables, especially dark green, red and orange vegetables and legumes (beans and peas). Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins, minerals and other substances that may protect against many chronic diseases. They are high in fiber and help children feel fuller longer.

To ensure adequate fiber and nutrient intake, the Dietary Guidelines recommends that most servings be from whole fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned and dried) instead of 100 percent juice. Whole fruits and vegetables provide nutrients and fiber that may be lost in the processing of juice. Juice does not offer any nutritional benefits over whole fruits and vegetables.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) also recommends that most fruits and vegetables come from whole food rather than juice. The AAP recommends limiting daily juice consumption to 4-6 ounces for ages 1 to 6 and 8-12 ounces for ages 7 to 18.<sup>16</sup> Excessive juice consumption may be linked to children becoming overweight or obese and is associated with tooth decay and diarrhea.

If juice is served, it must meet the requirements specified by [Section 10-221q](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes. For more information, see “[Standards for Beverages](#)” in section 1.

### OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- To ensure nutrient-rich choices for students, competitive foods should include a variety of different fruits and vegetables each day. Offer a la carte vegetable choices from each of the five vegetable subgroups, especially dark green, red and orange vegetables and legumes. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [Vegetable Subgroups](#).
- Include whole or cut up fresh fruits and vegetables without added fat, sugars or sodium whenever possible.
- Serve whole fruits and vegetables instead of juice. Fruit juice does not provide the same nutritional benefits as whole fruits. Whole fruits provide fewer calories and more nutrients than juice and should be served most often, as recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.



Fruits and Vegetables	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 200 calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	<p>The following fruit and vegetable products are exempt from the calorie standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li>• Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>All other fruit and vegetable products are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks calorie standard. For information on the rationale for limiting calories, see the previously indicated rationale under “Calories” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- If fruits and vegetables meet all requirements of the CNS, they may be served in a portion size that does not exceed 200 calories. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the calorie content of brand-specific products.
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared or packaged with added fats, sugars or sodium and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for calories. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s [handout, Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Fruits and Vegetables	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	<p>The following fruit and vegetable products are exempt from the fat standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li>• Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>All other fruit and vegetable products are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks total fat standard. For information on the rationale for limiting fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Total Fat” in [section 3](#).

The state nutrition standards committee kept the previous standard prohibiting artificial fat replacers because it is stricter than Smart Snacks and supports the philosophy of the CNS. For more information, see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1.

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any fruit or vegetable products containing added chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase and prepare fruits and vegetables without added fat. Consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the fat content of brand-specific products.
- If fruits or vegetables contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see the trans fats standard in this section and “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- Avoid fried or baked pre-fried vegetables, such as french fries, potato puffs and hash brown patties.
- If accompaniments (e.g., condiments) are used, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that fruits and vegetables do not contain chemically altered fat substitutes. For more information, see “chemically altered fat substitutes” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared or packaged with added fat and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE's [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Fruits and Vegetables	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	<p>The following fruit and vegetable products are exempt from the standard for saturated fat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li>• Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>All other fruit and vegetable products are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks saturated fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted the fruit and vegetable exemptions to be consistent with the USDA interim final rule. For information on the rationale for limiting fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Saturated Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase and prepare fruits and vegetables without added saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the saturated fat content of brand-specific products.
- If fruits or vegetables contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see the trans fat standard in this section and “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared or packaged with added fat and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Fruits and Vegetables	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Effective with school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), the CNS trans fat standard is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. For information on the rationale for eliminating trans fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Trans Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement and select products without partially hydrogenated oils. The Better Choice Recommendations on the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) indicate foods without partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see “[Better Choice Recommendations](#)” in section 1.
- Effective July 1, 2015, all entree products must be completely trans fat free, i.e., the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils. Read the ingredients statement to identify whether a product contains partially hydrogenated oils.
- Purchase and prepare fruits and vegetables without added fat. If fruits or vegetables contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made vegetables. Eliminate added sources of trans fat when cooking such as vegetable shortening and margarines that contain partially hydrogenated oils. For more information on lowering fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared or packaged with added fat and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for trans fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Fruits and Vegetables	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	<p>The following fruit and vegetable products are exempt from the standard for sugars but cannot contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li>• Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> <li>• Dried whole fruits or vegetables, dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces and dehydrated fruits or vegetables, all without added sweeteners (including artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols).</li> </ul> <p>All other fruit and vegetable products are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for sugars has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting added sugars, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sugars” in [section 3](#).



The naturally occurring sugars in fruits and vegetables are not a health concern, due to the rich nutrient content of these foods. The CNS includes an exemption for canned fruits packed in extra light syrup or light syrup to be consistent with Smart Snacks. The restriction on nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes) is consistent with the committee’s previous approach to nonnutritive sweeteners and sugar alcohols, and is stricter than Smart Snacks.



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- If processed fruits and vegetables are served, choose products that are lowest in sugars. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sugar content of brand-specific products.
- Read labels for processed fruits and choose those without added sugars. The Nutrition Facts label lists total sugars but does not differentiate between those that are added or naturally occurring. The ingredients statement indicates whether sugars are added. A food is likely to be high in added sugars if they appear first or second in the ingredients list or if several sugars are listed. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “added sugars” in the [Glossary](#).
- Serve canned fruits in their natural juices or water instead of light syrup.
- Serve dried fruits and vegetables without added sugars or sweeteners. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3, and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared with added sugars and sold a la carte to students, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Fruits and Vegetables	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 230 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ Effective July 1, 2016, no more than 200 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	<p>The following fruit and vegetable products are exempt from the sodium standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water.</li> <li>• Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup, all without added artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners, sugar alcohols or fats (including chemically altered fat substitutes).</li> <li>• Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain no added ingredients except a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>All other fruit and vegetable products are not exempt and must meet all nutrient standards.</p>

## RATIONALE

The standard for sodium has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks sodium standard. For information on the rationale for limiting sodium, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sodium” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose fruits and vegetables that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sodium content of brand-specific products.
- Serve fresh vegetables and fruits (whole or cut up) whenever possible.
- If canned vegetables are served, choose low-sodium varieties.
- If school-made fruits and vegetables are prepared with added sodium and sold a la carte to students, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Fruits and Vegetables	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is stricter than the Smart Snacks caffeine standard. Smart Snacks prohibits caffeinated foods and beverages for elementary and middle students, but allows them for high school students. The CNS prohibit caffeine in all foods and beverages for all grades. For information on the rationale for limiting caffeine, see the previously indicated rationale under “Caffeine” in [section 3](#).

**Note:** Connecticut’s beverage statute prohibits caffeinated beverages and therefore supersedes the federal requirements. For more information, see “[Standards for Beverages](#)” in section 1.

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any fruit or vegetable products containing added caffeine. However, the committee kept the previous standard prohibiting caffeine to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for processed fruits and vegetables to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.
- Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the standards for fruits and vegetables.



## 7 — Standards for Cooked Grains

This category includes all cooked grains such as rice, pasta and quinoa, except for cooked breakfast cereals like oatmeal, which are in the “Snacks” category (see [section 3](#)). These standards apply to the amount of the food item **as served** including any added accompaniments such as butter, oil, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard and salad dressing. For more examples of accompaniments, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.



### WHOLE GRAIN-RICH CRITERIA

All cooked grains must meet the WGR criteria under general standard 1. They must contain at least 50 percent whole grains by weight or have a whole grain as the first ingredient. Any remaining grain ingredients must be enriched. If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be a whole grain. For more information, see “General Standards” in section 2).

Products that contain any **noncreditable grains** at levels of more than two percent of the product formula ( $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce equivalent) do not meet this standard. Examples of noncreditable grain ingredients include oat fiber, corn fiber, wheat starch, corn starch, bran, germ and modified food starch including potato, legume and other vegetable flours.

The weight limit for noncreditable grains depends on the type of grain product, based on the groups in the USDA’s serving size in the ounce equivalents chart. These serving sizes are summarized in the CSDE’s handout, [Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents \(Oz Eq\) for School Nutrition Programs](#).

- To meet the whole grain-rich criteria of the CNS, products in **groups A-G (baked goods)** of the USDA ounce equivalents chart must contain **3.99 grams or less of noncreditable grains** in the food item as served. Examples of products in groups A-G include crackers, pretzels, breads, bagels, pancakes, waffles, French toast, muffins, cookies, cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, coffee cake and cake.
- To meet the whole grain-rich criteria of the CNS, products in **group H (cereal grains)** of the USDA ounce equivalents chart must contain **6.99 grams or less of noncreditable grains** in the food item as served. Examples of products in this group include pasta, rice, barley, cooked breakfast cereals, bulgur or cracked wheat and cereal grains such as amaranth, buckwheat, cornmeal, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries and rolled wheat.

The CSDE’s handout, [Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods](#), provides detailed guidance on how to determine whether a food is whole grain-rich. For more information, see “Rationale” and “Implementation Guidance” for general standard 1 in [section 2](#).

Cooked Grains	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 200 calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks calorie standard. For information on the rationale for limiting calories, see the previously indicated rationale under “Calories” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Cooked grains that meet all requirements of the CNS may be served in a portion size that does not exceed 200 calories. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the calorie content of brand-specific products.
- If school-made cooked grains are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for calories. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Cooked Grains	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks total fat standard. For information on the rationale for limiting fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Total Fat” in [section 3](#).

The state nutrition standards committee kept the previous standard prohibiting artificial fat replacers because it is stricter than Smart Snacks, and supports the philosophy of the CNS. For more information, see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1.

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any cooked grain products containing added chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase cooked grains that are lower in fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the fat content of brand-specific products.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made cooked grains. For more information on reducing fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If cooked grains contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If accompaniments (e.g., condiments) are used, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that cooked grains do not contain chemically altered fat substitutes. For more information, see “chemically altered fat substitutes” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made cooked grains are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the fat standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Cooked Grains	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks saturated fat standard. For information on the rationale for limiting saturated fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Saturated Fat” in [section 3](#)

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Purchase cooked grains that are lower in saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the saturated fat content of brand-specific products.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for school-made cooked grains. For more information on reducing saturated fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If cooked grains contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If accompaniments (e.g., condiments) are used, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- If school-made cooked grains are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the fat standard. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.





Cooked Grains	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Effective with school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), the CNS trans fat standard is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. For information on the rationale for eliminating trans fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Trans Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- All foods must be completely trans fat free, i.e., the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils. Read the ingredients statement to identify whether a product contains partially hydrogenated oils.
- Purchase and prepare cooked grains without added fat. If cooked grains contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- Use low-fat cooking techniques for cooked grains. Eliminate added sources of trans fat when cooking such as vegetable shortening and margarines that contain partially hydrogenated oils. For more information on reducing fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- If school-made cooked grains are prepared or packaged with added fat and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for trans fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Cooked Grains	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight and no more than 15 grams of total sugars as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The state nutrition standards committee revised the previous standard of “no more than 15 grams of total sugars” to include “percent by weight” for consistency with Smart Snacks. However, to maintain the integrity of the previous CNS, the committee chose to keep the standard of no more than 15 grams because “percent by weight” alone does not provide any appreciable restriction of sugar content for dense foods like cooked grains.

Using only the USDA’s “percent by weight” standard would weaken the integrity of the previous CNS. For example, using 35 percent by weight, a ½-cup serving of brown rice with sweet and sour sauce that weighs 3 ounces could contain up to 29.8 grams (almost 2 ½ tablespoons) of total sugars. This is almost twice the amount of sugars allowed by Connecticut’s limit of no more than 15 grams. Since cooked grains are typically low in added sugars, most products will not reach these levels. However, the committee kept the standard of “no more than 15 grams” to ensure that high-sugar cooked grain products are not used.

Cooked grains are generally served by **volume** (e.g., ½ cup) not **weight** (e.g., 3 ounces). This makes the “percent by weight” calculation difficult unless the menu planner can determine the equivalent weight of the actual serving size, e.g., the weight of ½ cup of cooked rice. The weight of a serving of cooked grains varies depending on many factors such as the ingredients used, cooking method, cooking time and type of food, e.g., brown rice, long-grain white rice or short-grain white rice and whole-wheat or enriched pasta. Recipes generally express the serving size for cooked grains as volume not weight. For more information, see “[Volume versus Weight](#)” in section 2.

The committee kept the previous standard prohibiting nonnutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural) and sugar alcohols because it is stricter than the USDA interim final rule standards and supports the philosophy of the CNS. For more information “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1. For information on the rationale for limiting sugars, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sugars” in [section 3](#).



## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Cooked grains prepared without added sugars will meet the sugars standard. Cooked grains are naturally low in total sugars unless sugars are added.
- Serve unprocessed **100 percent whole-grain** products most often such as whole-wheat pasta and whole-grain brown rice. Whole grain-rich products may not be 100 percent whole grain. For more information, on choosing whole-grain products, see section 2 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.
- If purchasing processed products, choose cooked grains that are lowest in sugars. Consult the CSDE's *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* for the sugars content of brand-specific products.
- Read labels and choose cooked grains without added sugars. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “added sugars” in the [Glossary](#).
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made cooked grains are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE's handout, *Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS*. For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE's [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Cooked Grains	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 230 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ Effective July 1, 2016, no more than 200 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The state nutrition standards committee reduced the previous sodium standard (no more than 480 milligrams) for consistency with the sodium standard in the USDA interim final rule. For information on the rationale for limiting sodium, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sodium” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose cooked grains that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the sodium content of brand-specific products.
- Prepare school-made cooked grains with no or minimal sodium. For more information on reducing sodium, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- Use salt-free seasonings such as herbs and spices.
- Eliminate saltshakers and salt packets from the serving line.
- Provide low-sodium alternatives to condiments, dressings and sauces. For more information, see [“Accompaniments”](#) in section 2.
- If school-made cooked grains are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Cooked Grains	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is stricter than the Smart Snacks caffeine standard. The interim final rule prohibits caffeinated foods and beverages for elementary and middle students but allows them for high school students. The CNS prohibit caffeine in all foods for all grades. For information on the rationale for limiting caffeine, see the previously indicated rationale under “Caffeine” in [section 3](#).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any cooked grain products containing added caffeine. However, the committee kept the previous standard prohibiting caffeine to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for cooked grains to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.
- Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for brand-specific products that meet the standards for cooked grains.



## 8 — Standards for Soups

This category includes all soups including ready-to-serve, canned, frozen and rehydrated. The standards apply to the amount of the food item **as served** including any added accompaniments such as sour cream, grated cheese or croutons. For more examples of accompaniments, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.

Soups	
CALORIES	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 200 calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

### RATIONALE

The standard for calories has not changed since the last update of the CNS and is consistent with Smart Snacks. For information on the rationale for limiting calories, see the previously indicated rationale under “Calories” in [section 3](#).

### IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- If soups meet all requirements of the CNS, they may be served in a portion size that does not exceed 200 calories. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the calorie content of brand-specific products.
- If school-made soups are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for calories. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.





Soups	
TOTAL FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No chemically altered fat substitutes.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for total fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks standard for total fat. For information on the rationale for limiting fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Total Fat” in [section 3](#).

The state nutrition standards committee kept the previous standard prohibiting artificial fat replacers because it is stricter than the USDA interim final rule standard and supports the philosophy of the CNS. For more information, see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1.

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any soup products containing added chemically altered fat substitutes. However, the committee kept the previous standard to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose commercial soups that are lowest in fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the fat content of brand-specific products.
- Prepare school-made soups with minimal or no added fat. If fat is used, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see the trans fats standard in this section and “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#). For more information on reducing fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- When preparing milk-based soups, use low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk instead of whole or reduced-fat (2%) milk.
- If accompaniments (e.g., condiments) are used, serve low-fat versions in individual portion sizes. For more information, see “[Accompaniments](#)” in section 2.
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that soups do not contain chemically altered fat substitutes. For more information, see “chemically altered fat substitutes” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made soups are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Soups	
SATURATED FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Less than 10 percent of calories as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for saturated fat has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is consistent with the Smart Snacks standard for saturated fat. For information on the rationale for limiting saturated fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Saturated Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose commercial soups that are lowest in saturated fat. Consult the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) for the saturated fat content of brand-specific products.
- Prepare school-made soups with minimal or no added fat. If fat is used, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see the trans fats standard in this section and “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#). For more information on reducing fat, see section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).
- When preparing milk-based soups, use low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk instead of whole or reduced-fat (2%) milk.
- If school-made soups are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for saturated fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Soups	
TRANS FAT	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 gram) as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ All foods must be 100 percent trans fat free including any added accompaniments. Labels must indicate zero trans fat as served and the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The trans fat standard has not changed since the last update of the CNS. Beginning school year 2015-16 (July 1, 2015), the CNS trans fat standard is stricter than the Smart Snacks trans fat standard. The state nutrition standards committee adopted a stricter standard than the USDA interim final rule standards because the federal standard does not eliminate partially hydrogenated oils. For information on the rationale for eliminating trans fat, see the previously indicated rationale under “Trans Fat” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement and select products without partially hydrogenated oils. The Better Choice Recommendations on the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) indicate foods without partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see “[Better Choice Recommendations](#)” in section 1.
- Effective July 1, 2015, all products must be completely trans fat free, i.e., the ingredients statement cannot contain any partially hydrogenated oils. Read the ingredients statement to identify whether a product contains partially hydrogenated oils.
- Purchase and prepare soups without added fat. If soups contain added fat, choose products with healthy unsaturated fats, e.g., polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats and no partially hydrogenated oils. For more information, see “polyunsaturated” and “monounsaturated fats” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made soups are prepared or packaged with added fat and are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for trans fat. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.

Soups	
SUGARS	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight and no more than 15 grams of total sugars as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ No artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The committee revised the previous standard of “no more than 15 grams of total sugars” to include “percent by weight” for consistency with Smart Snacks. However, to maintain the integrity of the previous CNS, the committee chose to keep the standard of “no more than 15 grams of total sugars” because “percent by weight” cannot be applied to foods whose serving size is based on **volume** (fluid ounces) instead of **weight** (ounces). “Percent of sugars by weight” cannot be easily determined because commercially prepared soups and recipes for school-made soups do not provide information on the weight of a serving. For more information, see “[Volume versus Weight](#)” in section 2.

Even if serving weight information is available, using only the USDA’s “percent by weight” standard would weaken the integrity of the previous CNS. “Percent of sugars by weight” allows a high amount of sugars for dense foods such as soups. Since soups are typically low in added sugars, most products will not reach these levels. However, the committee kept the standard of “no more than 15 grams of total sugars” to ensure that high-sugar soup products are not used.

The committee kept the previous standard prohibiting nonnutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural) and sugar alcohols because it is stricter than the USDA interim final rule standards and supports the philosophy of the CNS. For more information, see “[CNS Philosophy](#)” in section 1. For information on the rationale for limiting sugars, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sugars” in [section 3](#).

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read labels and choose foods without added sugars. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “added sugars” in the [Glossary](#).
- Read the ingredients statement to ensure that foods do not contain artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweeteners or sugar alcohols. For more information, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3 and “artificial sweeteners,” “nonnutritive sweeteners” and “sugar alcohols” in the [Glossary](#).
- If school-made soups are sold a la carte, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for total sugars. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#). For more information, see “school-made foods” in the [Glossary](#) and the CSDE’s [Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS](#) Web page.



Soups	
SODIUM	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No more than 230 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> <li>■ Effective July 1, 2016, no more than 200 milligrams as served including any added accompaniments.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The committee revised the previous sodium standard (no more than 480 milligrams) to be consistent with the lower sodium standard in the USDA interim final rule. For information on the rationale for limiting sodium, see the previously indicated rationale under “Sodium” in [section 3](#).

The committee recognizes that these sodium limits are very restrictive when applied to the “Soups” category because they eliminate most commercial soups currently available. The October 2013 version of the CSDE’s *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* contains 37 soups that meet the previous standard of no more than 480 milligrams of sodium. None of these soups contain 230 milligrams of sodium or less per serving. The lowest contains 250 milligrams of sodium per serving.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Choose soups that are lowest in sodium. Consult the CSDE’s *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* for the sodium content of brand-specific products.
- Prepare soups from scratch to control sodium content. Use salt-free seasonings, such as herbs and spices. For more information on reducing sodium, see section 5 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.
- If soup bases are used, purchase low-sodium varieties.
- If school-made soups are prepared with added sodium and sold a la carte to students, the school is responsible for analyzing the standardized recipes to ensure that they meet the standard for sodium. For specific guidance, see the CSDE’s handout, *Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS*. For more information, see “school-made foods” in the *Glossary* and the CSDE’s *Evaluating Foods for Compliance with the CNS* Web page.



Soups	
CAFFEINE	
Nutrient Standard	Exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.</li> </ul>	None

## RATIONALE

The standard for caffeine has not changed since the last update of the CNS. It is stricter than the Smart Snacks caffeine standard. The interim final rule prohibits caffeinated foods and beverages for elementary and middle students but allows them for high school students. The CNS prohibit caffeine in all foods and beverages for all grades. For information on the rationale for limiting caffeine, see the previously indicated rationale under “Caffeine” in [section 3](#).

To date, the CSDE is not aware of any soup products containing added caffeine. However, the committee kept the previous standard prohibiting caffeine to prevent the future use of any commercial products developed with this ingredient.

## IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

- Read the ingredients statement for soups to ensure that products do not contain added caffeine.
- Consult the CSDE’s *List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages* for brand-specific products that meet the standards for soups.

## 9 — Resources

This section summarizes the CSDE's Web pages and resources to assist schools with implementing the CNS, HFC (Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes) and the state beverage requirements (Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes).

### BEVERAGE REQUIREMENTS WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418)

*Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/allowbev.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/allowbev.pdf)

*Allowable Milk Substitutes:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/milk\\_sub.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/milk_sub.pdf)

*Competitive Foods Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772)

*Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/ctcfreg.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/ctcfreg.pdf)

*Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/cfg.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/cfg.pdf)

*Overview of Federal versus State Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods in Schools* (CSDE Operational Memorandum 11-14):

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/opmemos/14/om\\_11-14.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/opmemos/14/om_11-14.pdf)

*Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/waterjuicebev.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/waterjuicebev.pdf)

*Requirements for Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools* (PowerPoint Presentation):

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/beverages.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/beverages.pdf)

*Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400)

*Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/smartsnacks.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/smartsnacks.pdf)

### CONNECTICUT NUTRITION STANDARDS WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422)

*Comparison Chart: USDA Smart Snacks and Connecticut Nutrition Standards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cnscomparisonchart.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cnscomparisonchart.pdf)

*Connecticut Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cns.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cns.pdf)

*HFC Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420)

*List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432)

*Summary of Connecticut Nutrition Standards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/summarycns2015.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/summarycns2015.pdf)



**EVALUATING FOODS FOR COMPLIANCE WEB PAGE**

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322430](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322430)

*Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/evalrecipe.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/evalrecipe.pdf)

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432)

*Submitting Food and Beverage Products for Approval:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/submitproduct.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/submitproduct.pdf)

*Worksheet 1 Snacks:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet1.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet1.xls)

*Worksheet 2 Yogurt and Pudding:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet2.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet2.xls)

*Worksheet 3 Smoothies:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet3.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet3.xls)

*Worksheet 4 Fruits and Vegetables:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet4.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet4.xls)

*Worksheet 5 Soups:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet5.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet5.xls)

*Worksheet 6 Cooked Grains:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet6.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet6.xls)

*Worksheet 7 Entrees:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet7.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet7.xls)

*Worksheet 8 Non-entree Combination Foods:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet8.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet8.xls)

*Worksheet 9 Nutrient Analysis of Recipes:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet9.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet9.xls)

*Worksheet 10 Evaluating Recipes for Trans Fat:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet10.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet10.xls)

*Worksheet 11 Evaluating Recipes for Sugars:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet11.xls](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cns/cnsworksheet11.xls)

**HFC APPLICATION FORMS WEB PAGE**

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322424](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322424)

*Application Procedures for HFC (PowerPoint):*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/application.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/application.pdf)

*Checklist for HFC:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/appcheckhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/appcheckhfc.pdf)

*District Contact and Information Sheet:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/districtcontact.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/districtcontact.pdf)

*HFC Letter for Superintendents:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/covletter\\_hf.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/covletter_hf.pdf)

*HFC Statement:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/ed099add.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/ed099add.pdf)

*HFC Statement Instructions:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/instrhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/hfcapp/instrhfc.pdf)

## HFC APPLICATION FORMS WEB PAGE, continued

*Responsibilities of HFC District Contact Person:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/dcresp.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/dcresp.pdf)

*Summary of Connecticut Nutrition Standards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/summarycns2015.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/summarycns2015.pdf)

## HFC DOCUMENTATION WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322428](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322428)

*Checklist for HFC Documentation:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/doccheckhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/doccheckhfc.pdf)

*Districts Required to Submit Food and Beverage Lists:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322428](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322428)

*Documenting Compliance with HFC (PowerPoint):*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/documentation.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/documentation.pdf)

*Ensuring District Compliance with HFC:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/ensurehfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/ensurehfc.pdf)

*Guidance for Documenting Compliance with HFC:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/guidehfcdoc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfcdoc/guidehfcdoc.pdf)

*Responsibilities of HFC District Contact Person:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/dcresp.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/dcresp.pdf)

## HFC REQUIREMENTS WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322426](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322426)

*Connecticut Nutrition Standards Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422)

*Ensuring District Compliance with HFC:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/ensurehfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/ensurehfc.pdf)

*Evaluating Foods for Compliance Web Page:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322430](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322430)

*HFC Overview:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/reqhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/reqhfc.pdf)

*Questions and Answers on Connecticut Statutes for School Foods and Beverages:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cgsqa.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cgsqa.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/storehfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/storehfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/vendhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/vendhfc.pdf)

*Requirements for Selling Foods and Beverages in Adult Education Programs:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/adultedhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/adultedhfc.pdf)

*Resources for Healthy Foods and Beverages in Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/resourceshf.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/resourceshf.pdf)

## HFC REQUIREMENTS WEB PAGE, continued

*Sample Fundraiser Form:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.pdf)

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word\\_docs/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.doc](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.doc)

*Understanding HFC (PowerPoint):*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/understandhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/understandhfc.pdf)

## HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

*Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322436](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322436)

*Alternatives to Food Rewards:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/nutritioned/food\\_rewards.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/nutritioned/food_rewards.pdf)

*Guidelines for a Coordinated Approach to School Health:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/guidelines\\_csh.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/guidelines_csh.pdf)

*Healthy Celebrations:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/nutritioned/healthy\\_celebrations.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/nutritioned/healthy_celebrations.pdf)

*Healthy Fundraising:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/nutrition/cf/healthyfund.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/nutrition/cf/healthyfund.pdf)

Healthy School Environment Resources Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=333798](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=333798)

Nutrition Resources Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=333798](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=333798)

*Requirements for School Wellness Policy:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/school\\_wellness.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/school_wellness.pdf)

School Wellness Policies Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322438](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322438)

## LIST OF ACCEPTABLE FOODS AND BEVERAGES WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432)

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432)

*List of Vendors Selling Healthy Foods and Beverages:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/vendorcontact.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/vendorcontact.pdf)

*Submitting Food and Beverage Products for Approval:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/submitproduct.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/submitproduct.pdf)

*Summary of Updates:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/updatesfb.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fblast/updatesfb.pdf)

## STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL FOODS AND BEVERAGES WEB PAGE

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322416](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322416)

Beverage Requirements Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322418)

*C.G.S. Section 10-215. Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-215a. Nonpublic school and nonprofit agency participation in feeding programs:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215a.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215a.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-215e. Nutrition standards for food that is not part of lunch or breakfast program:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215e.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215e.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-215f. Certification that food meets nutrition standards:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215f.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm#Sec10-215f.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-221o. Lunch Periods and Recess:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221o.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221o.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-221p. Boards to make available for purchase nutritious and low-fat foods:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221p.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221p.htm)

*C.G.S. Section 10-221q. Sale of beverages:*

[www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221q.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm#Sec10-221q.htm)

Competitive Foods Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772)

Connecticut Nutrition Standards Web Page:

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322422)

*Federal and State Requirements for Provision and Timeframe of Daily Lunch Period for Students:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/circ/circ07-08/C9.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/circ/circ07-08/C9.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers in Non-HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundnonhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundnonhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Fundraisers in Private Schools and RCCIs:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundnonhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/fundnonhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storehfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storehfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores in HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/storehfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/storehfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores in Non-HFC Public Schools:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storenonhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storenonhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for School Stores in Private Schools and RCCIs:*

[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storepr.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/storepr.pdf)

## STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS, continued

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines in HFC Public Schools:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines in HFC Public Schools:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/vendhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/vendhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines in Non-HFC Public Schools:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendnonhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendnonhfc.pdf)

*Food and Beverage Requirements for Vending Machines in Private Schools and RCCIs:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendpr.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cf/vendpr.pdf)

*Healthy Fundraising:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/nutrition/cf/healthyfund.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/nutrition/cf/healthyfund.pdf)

*HFC Overview:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/reqhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/reqhfc.pdf)

*HFC Web Page:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420)

*List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages Web Page:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322432)

*Questions and Answers on Connecticut Statutes for School Foods and Beverages:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cgsqa.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/cgsqa.pdf)

*Requirements for Private Schools and RCCIs:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/nutrition/cf/reqpr.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/nutrition/cf/reqpr.pdf)

*Requirements for Public Schools Not Choosing HFC:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/nutrition/cf/reqnonhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/nutrition/cf/reqnonhfc.pdf)

*Sample Form for Approving Food and Beverage Fundraisers (HFC):*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.pdf)  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word\\_docs/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.doc](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/hfc/fundformhfc.doc)

*Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards Web Page:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400)

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## Glossary

**a la carte sales:** Foods and beverages that are sold separately from reimbursable meals in the USDA school nutrition programs. A la carte items include, but are not limited to, foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria serving lines, a la carte lines, kiosks, vending machines, school stores and snack bars located anywhere on school grounds. For more information, see “competitive foods” in this section.

**accompaniments:** Foods that accompany another food or beverage item, such as butter, cream cheese, syrup, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise and salad dressing. Foods must be evaluated for compliance with the CNS based on the amount of the food item as served including any added accompaniments, e.g., bagel with cream cheese, waffles with syrup, WGR pasta with butter, duck sauce with egg rolls and fruit crisp with whipped cream. For more examples, see [table 2-1](#) in section 2.

**added sugars:** Sugars and syrups added to foods in processing or preparation, as opposed to the naturally occurring sugars found in foods like fruits, vegetables, grains and dairy products. Examples of added sugars include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar and syrup.

**artificial sweeteners:** Ingredients without calories that are used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Artificial sweeteners are hundreds of times sweeter than sugar. Common artificial sweeteners include acesulfame potassium (Acesulfame-K, Sunett, Sweet & Safe, Sweet One), aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal), neotame, saccharin (Sweet and Low, Sweet Twin, Sweet ‘N Low Brown, Necta Sweet), sucralose (Splenda) and tagatose. These nonnutritive sweeteners are calorie-free, except for aspartame, which is very low in calories. For more information, see “nonnutritive sweeteners” in this section. For a list of artificial sweeteners, see [table 3-4](#) in section 3.

**carbohydrates:** A category of nutrients that includes sugars (simple carbohydrates) and starch and fiber (complex carbohydrates). Foods in the basic food groups that provide carbohydrates — fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, grains, milk and dairy products — are important sources of many nutrients. However, foods containing large amounts of added sugars provide calories but few, if any, nutrients. Carbohydrates are easily converted by the body to energy (calories). The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend consuming 45 to 65 percent of total daily calories from carbohydrates, especially complex carbohydrates. For more information, see “added sugars,” “simple carbohydrates” and “complex carbohydrates” in this section.

**cheese:** See “natural cheese” and “pasteurized blended cheese” in this section.

**chemically altered fat substitutes:** Compounds made by chemically manipulating food products to mimic the texture and flavor of fat while providing fewer calories and less metabolizable fat. Examples include Olestra, Olean and Simplese. Fat substitutes can have negative side effects. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards do not allow foods or beverages with these ingredients.

**Child Nutrition (CN) label:** A statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. Products eligible for CN labeling include main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. The CN label will also indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, “[Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#)” and the USDA’s [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling](#) Web page.

**Child Nutrition Programs:** The USDA’s federally funded programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to children, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP also provides nutritious meals and snacks to the frail elderly in adult day care centers. For more information, see the CSDE’s [Child Nutrition Programs](#) Web page.

**cholesterol:** A fat-like substance that performs important functions in the body such as making cell membranes and some hormones. There are two different types of cholesterol. *Blood (serum) cholesterol* circulates in the body in lipoproteins, such as low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and high-density lipoprotein (HDL). LDL is known as “bad” cholesterol because high levels can clog arteries, causing atherosclerosis. A high level of serum cholesterol is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, which leads to heart attack. HDL is known as “good” cholesterol because high levels seem to protect against heart attack. *Dietary cholesterol* does not contain any calories. It comes from foods of animal origin, including meat, fish, poultry, eggs and dairy products. Plant foods (including vegetable oils) do not contain cholesterol. There is no dietary requirement for cholesterol because the body can make all it needs.

**combination foods:** Foods that contain more than one food component such as pizza, burritos, vegetable egg rolls and smoothies made with low-fat yogurt and fruit. For example, macaroni and cheese contains pasta (grains) and cheese (meat/meat alternate). Combination foods generally cannot be separated (such as pizza or a burrito) or are not intended to be separated (such as hamburger on a bun or turkey sandwich). Some combination foods are not entree items as defined by the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.

**complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber):** Complex carbohydrates include starch and fiber, which are made from three or more simple sugars linked together. Starch is the storage form of energy in plants and provides calories. Fiber is the structural framework of plants and does not contain any calories. Food sources of complex carbohydrates include legumes, starchy vegetables (e.g., potatoes, corn, dry beans and green peas), whole-grain breads and cereals, and nuts and seeds. For more information, see “dietary fiber” in this section.

**competitive foods:** All foods and beverages available for sale to students **anytime** on school premises other than meals served through the USDA school meal programs. Competitive food sales include, but are not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers. For other potential sources of food sales, see [table 1-1](#) in section 2. For more information, see “a la carte sales” in this section.

**Connecticut Nutrition Standards:** State nutrition standards developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education per Section 10-215e of the Connecticut General Statutes. The CNS address the nutritional content of all foods sold to students separately from reimbursable school meals. The standards limit calories, fat, saturated fat, sodium and added sugars, eliminate trans fat, and promote more nutrient-rich foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, legumes and lean meats. All schools in any district that chooses to comply with HFC under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes must follow the CNS for all sources of food sales to students, including school cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers and any other sources. The CNS also apply to snacks served in the Afterschool Snack Program. For more information, see the CSDE's [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) Web page.

**Daily Value:** A number on the Nutrition Facts panel of food labels that provides recommendations for daily intake of nutrients based on daily caloric intakes of 2,000 and 2,500 calories. The Nutrition Facts panel also includes percent Daily Value, which shows how a serving of the food fits into an overall daily diet of 2,000 calories.

**dietary fiber:** Nondigestible carbohydrates and lignin (a noncarbohydrate substance bound to fiber) that are naturally occurring in plants, e.g., gums, cellulose, fiber in oats and wheat bran. Fiber improves gastrointestinal health and reduces risk of several chronic diseases, such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes and colon cancer. There are two types of dietary fiber, insoluble and soluble. *Insoluble fibers* aid in digestion by adding bulk and softness to stools to promote regularity and prevent constipation. Insoluble fibers decrease the amount of “transit time” for food waste in the intestine. Insoluble fibers include whole-wheat products, wheat and corn bran, many vegetables (e.g., cauliflower, beans and potatoes) and the skins of fruits and root vegetables. *Soluble fibers* (e.g., gums, mucilages and pectin) bind to fatty substances in the body to promote their excretion as waste. They help lower blood cholesterol levels and also help regulate the body's use of sugars. Soluble fibers are found in dry beans and peas, oats, oatmeal, barley, psyllium seed husk, and many fruits and vegetables, such as apples, carrots, citrus fruits, strawberries, prunes, dry beans and other legumes.

**Dietary Guidelines for Americans:** A federal document that provides science-based advice for Americans ages 2 and older to promote health and to reduce risk for chronic diseases through diet and physical activity. The [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) is published jointly every five years by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and forms the basis of federal food, nutrition education and information programs. For more information, see the [Dietary Guidelines](#) Web page at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>.

**Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs):** A set of nutrient-based reference values that expand upon and replace the former Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) in the United States and the Recommended Nutrient Intakes (RNIs) in Canada. The DRIs include four reference values: Estimated Average Requirements (EARs), RDAs, Adequate Intakes (AIs) and Tolerable Upper Intake Levels (ULs).

**dietary specifications:** The USDA’s nutrition standards for meals in the NSLP and SBP. The dietary specifications include weekly calorie ranges, zero trans fat and limits for saturated fat and sodium. For more information, see the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.

**enriched grains:** Refined grains (such as wheat, rice and corn) and grain products (such as cereal, pasta and bread) that have vitamins and minerals added to replace the nutrients lost during processing. The five enrichment nutrients are added within limits specified by the FDA, and include thiamin (B<sub>1</sub>), riboflavin (B<sub>2</sub>), niacin (B<sub>3</sub>), folic acid and iron. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Enriched Grains*.

**entrees:** For the CNS, entrees include three categories of main dish food items: 1) a combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain-rich (WGR) food, e.g., breakfast egg sandwich on a whole-wheat English muffin, turkey wrap on whole-wheat tortilla, pizza with WGR crust, hamburger on a whole-grain bun and bean burrito with whole-corn tortilla; 2) a combination food of vegetable/fruit and meat/meat alternate, e.g., chef’s salad with turkey, cheese and hard-boiled egg, cheese and egg, fruit and cheese platter, yogurt and fruit parfaits, school-made yogurt and fruit smoothies, baked potato with chili and chicken vegetable stir-fry; and 3) a meat/meat alternate alone (e.g., sausage patty, hard-boiled egg, grilled chicken), excluding yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters and meat snacks, e.g., jerky and meat sticks. Yogurt served alone, cheese, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters and meat snacks must meet the nutrition standards for the “Snacks” category.

**event:** An occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. For more information, see [table 1-2](#) in section 2.

**fat substitutes:** See “chemically altered fat substitutes” in this section.

**fiber:** A general term for the indigestible carbohydrates (e.g., pectin, cellulose, and other substances) that make up the framework of plants. Dietary fiber is the total amount of these materials that are not digested by humans. For more information, see “dietary fiber” in this section.

**fortification:** Adding nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) that were not originally present in a food or beverage or adding nutrients at levels that are higher than originally present. Fortification is used both for naturally nutrient-rich products based on scientifically documented health needs (e.g., fortifying milk with vitamin D to increase the body’s absorption of calcium), and to enhance the perceived nutritional value of products with little or no natural nutritional value (e.g., fortifying “energy” bars made from processed flour with multiple vitamins and minerals). Fortification nutrients are added to products in varying amounts, from small percentages up to amounts greater than recommended intakes.

**fundraisers:** Any activities conducted by any school-related or outside organization or group on school premises, during which money or its equivalent (e.g., tickets, coupons, tokens and similar items) is exchanged for the purchase of a product in support of the school or school-related activities. Fundraisers also include any activities that suggest a student donation in exchange for foods and beverages, since funds may be raised as a result.

**Healthy Food Certification:** A state statute (Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes) that requires each board of education or governing authority for all public schools participating in the NSLP to certify annually to the CSDE whether they will follow the CNS for all foods sold to students separately from reimbursable meals. Districts that choose to implement the CNS receive 10 cents per lunch, based on the total number of reimbursable lunches (paid, free and reduced) served in the district in the prior school year. For more information, see “Connecticut Nutrition Standards” in this section and the CSDE’s [Healthy Food Certification](#) Web page.

**hydrogenated oils:** Oils that have undergone hydrogenation, a chemical process that adds hydrogen and changes the structure of unsaturated fatty acids to increase shelf life and flavor stability. Hydrogenation turns oils that are liquid at room temperature into solids, e.g., shortening and margarine. Oils can be either completely or partially hydrogenated. Partial hydrogenation results in the formation of trans fat, a type of fat that increases the risk for cardiovascular disease. For more information, see “trans fat” in this section.

**meals:** See “reimbursable school meal” in this section.

**meat alternates:** Foods that provide similar protein content to meat. Meat alternates include alternate protein products, cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut and coconut), yogurt, soy yogurt and commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein in a ¼-cup (2.2 ounces) serving. For more information, see section 2 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

**monosaturated fat:** A type of unsaturated fat that is found in nuts, seeds, avocados and liquid vegetable oils, such as canola oil, olive oil, high oleic safflower and sunflower oils. Monosaturated fats may help lower blood cholesterol when used as part of an overall diet that is moderate in fat.

**MyPlate:** Released in June 2011, MyPlate is the USDA’s food guidance system to translate the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) into a healthy eating plan. MyPlate emphasizes consuming more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy. For more information, see the [Choose MyPlate](#) Web site at [www.choosemyplate.gov/](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/).

**National School Lunch Program (NSLP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946. For more information, see the CSDE’s [National School Lunch Program](#) Web page.

**natural cheese:** Cheese that is produced directly from milk such as cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, muenster, provolone, Swiss, feta and brie. Natural cheese also includes pasteurized blended cheese that is made by blending one or more different kinds of natural cheese. Natural cheese does not include pasteurized process cheese (e.g., American), pasteurized process cheese food, pasteurized process cheese spread or pasteurized process cheese products.



**non-entree combination foods:** Products that do not meet the definition of entree items but that contain two or more components representing two or more of the recommended food groups: fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein or grains. This category addresses nutrient-rich combination foods that are not entrees such as yogurt and fruit parfaits, peanut butter with carrot sticks and hummus dip with vegetables. These foods either do not meet the main dish criteria for entrees or do not provide the minimum meal pattern requirements for meat/meat alternates and grains together or meat/meat alternates alone.

**nonnutritive sweeteners:** Ingredients without calories that are used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Nonnutritive sweeteners can be 200 to 600 times sweeter than sugar. They include artificial sweeteners such as acesulfame-potassium, neotame, saccharin and sucralose and “natural” sweeteners such as stevia (e.g., Rebiana, Rebaudioside A, Truvia, PureVia and SweetLeaf). For a list of artificial sweeteners, see “artificial sweeteners” in this section.

**nutrient-dense foods:** Foods that provide substantial amounts of naturally occurring vitamins, minerals and other nutrients with relatively few calories. Nutrient-dense foods include lean sources of protein and/or complex carbohydrates that are low in total fat and saturated fats. Examples include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or nonfat dairy products, lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, eggs and beans. Foods and beverages that are not nutrient dense provide calories from fat, added sugars and processed carbohydrates but relatively small amounts of nutrients (and sometimes none at all), unless they are fortified.

**nutrient-rich foods:** See “nutrient-dense foods” in this section.

**nutrition standards:** Guidelines for the nutritional content of foods and beverages that provide objective criteria for determining what can and cannot be offered, based on current nutrition science and national health recommendations. Nutrition standards help programs to increase healthy options and limit less healthy choices wherever foods and beverages are available. For more information, see “Connecticut Nutrition Standards” in this section.

**nutrition supplementation of products:** Addition of vitamins, minerals, amino acids (e.g., taurine, glutamine, lysine, arginine), extracts (e.g., green tea extract, gotu kola extract) and herbs or other botanicals (e.g., ginseng, ginkgo biloba) to a food or beverage. For many of these supplements, the efficacy and safety for consumption by children is not well known. Some nutrition supplements may have harmful side effects. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards do not allow foods or beverages with these ingredients.

**nutritive sweeteners:** Sweeteners that provide energy (calories) in the form of simple carbohydrates such as sugars and syrups. For more information, see “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates (sugars)” in this section.

**ounce equivalent:** The amount of food that meets the USDA serving size requirement for 1 ounce of lean meat/meat alternate or 1 ounce of grain in the meal patterns for the NSLP and the SBP.

**partially hydrogenated oils:** Oils that have been chemically altered to change their consistency from liquid to semi-solid, e.g., margarine. This process results in the formation of trans fat, a type of fat that increases the risk for cardiovascular disease. When products contain partially hydrogenated oils, they will be listed in the ingredients statement, e.g., partially hydrogenated cottonseed and partially hydrogenated soybean oil. For more information, see “trans fat” in this section.

**pasteurized blended cheese:** Pasteurized blended cheese is made by blending one or more different kinds of natural cheese into a homogenous mass. For more information, see “natural cheese” in this section.

**polyunsaturated fat:** A type of unsaturated fat that is found in fatty cold-water fish (e.g., salmon, mackerel and herring), nuts, seeds and liquid vegetable oils, such as safflower, sesame, soy, corn and sunflower. Polyunsaturated fats may help lower blood cholesterol when used as part of an overall diet that is moderate in fat.

**portion:** See “serving size” in this section.

**product formulation statement:** An information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how the product credits toward the USDA meal pattern requirements and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. All creditable ingredients in this statement must match a description in the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. Unlike a CN label, a product formulation statement does not provide any warranty against audit claims. If these foods will be used in a reimbursable meal, the SFA must check the manufacturer’s crediting information for accuracy. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Product Formulation Statements*.

**Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA):** The average daily dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirement of most healthy individuals in a particular life stage and gender group. The RDA is one of four reference values that comprise the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs). For more information, see definition for “Dietary Reference Intakes” in this section.

**refined grains:** Grains that have been processed to remove the bran and germ, making the product less nutritious than whole grains. Refined grains may or may not be enriched. For more information, see “enriched grains” in this section.

**reimbursable school meal:** A meal that meets the requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.

**saturated fat:** A type of fat that raises blood cholesterol, which is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Major sources of saturated fat include animal products (e.g., cheese, beef, milk, oils, snack foods, butter and lard) and tropical vegetable oils (palm, palm kernel and coconut). For more information, see “solid fats” and “trans fats” in this section.

**School Breakfast Program (SBP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The SBP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts to children each school day. The program was established under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to ensure that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness and healthy eating behaviors. For more information, see the CSDE’s *School Breakfast Program* Web page.

**school day:** The period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

**school food authority (SFA):** The governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and has the legal authority to operate the USDA school nutrition programs, e.g., National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program and Special Milk Program.

**school-made foods:** Foods that are 1) prepared from scratch using a recipe ,e.g., entrees, soup, baked goods, cooked grains, vegetables; or 2) require some additional processing by adding other ingredients after purchasing, e.g., popping popcorn kernels with added oil, making cookies from a mix and adding butter and eggs, and assembling a sandwich. Before they can be sold to students, these foods require a nutrient analysis of the recipe to determine whether they meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [Guidance on Evaluating School Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#), and [Evaluating Food for Compliance](#) Web page.

**school premises:** All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the local or regional board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system or the governing authority district or school.

**serving size:** The weight, measure or number of pieces or slices of a food, or volume of a beverage, provided to students. The individual serving size or package cannot exceed 480 calories for entrees or 200 calories for all other foods. All foods and beverages are evaluated for compliance with the CNS and Smart Snacks nutrition standards based on the amount of the food item **as served** including any added accompaniments. For more information, see “accompaniments” in this section.

**simple carbohydrates (sugars):** Carbohydrates consisting of one (e.g., fructose and galactose) or two (e.g., lactose, maltose, sucrose) sugars. Sugars can be naturally present in foods (such as the fructose in fruit or the lactose in milk) or added to foods (such as sucrose or table sugar). Foods that naturally contain simple carbohydrates (such as fruits, milk and milk products and some vegetables) also contain vitamins and minerals. Foods that contain large amounts of added sugars (such as cookies, candy, pastries, sweetened baked goods, regular soft drinks and other sweetened drinks) provide calories with few, if any, nutrients. For more information, see “added sugars” in this section.

**sodium:** A mineral that helps maintain the body’s fluid balance and blood pressure. Diets that are high in sodium can increase the risk of high blood pressure in individuals who are sodium sensitive.

**solid fats:** Fats that are usually not liquid at room temperature. Solid fats are found in most animal foods but also can be made from vegetable oils through hydrogenation. Some common solid fats include butter, beef fat (tallow, suet), chicken fat, pork fat (lard), stick margarine, coconut oil, palm oil, and shortening. Foods high in solid fats include full-fat (regular) cheese, cream, whole milk, ice cream, well-marbled cuts of meats, regular ground beef, bacon, sausages, poultry skin and many baked goods such as cookies, crackers, donuts, pastries and croissants. Solid fats contain more saturated fat and/or trans fat. For more information, see “saturated fat” and “trans fat” in this section.

**standard of identity for food:** The mandatory government requirements that determine what a food product must contain to be marketed under a certain name in interstate commerce. These standards protect consumers by ensuring a label accurately reflects what is inside, e.g., mayonnaise is not an imitation spread, ice cream is not a similar, but different, frozen dessert. Standards for meat and poultry products are developed by the USDA. For other food products, standards are set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

**standardized recipe:** A recipe that a given food service operation has tested and adapted for use. This recipe produces the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment, and the same quantity and quality of ingredients. Standardized recipes include specific information such as ingredients, weights and measures, preparation directions, serving directions, yield and portion size.



**sucrose:** Another name for table sugar. Sucrose contains glucose and fructose. For more information, see “simple carbohydrates (sugars) in this section.

**sugar alcohols (polyols):** A type of carbohydrate used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Sugar alcohols are incompletely absorbed and metabolized by the body, and contribute fewer calories than most sugars. They also perform other functions such as adding bulk and texture to foods. Common sugar alcohols include sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol, maltitol syrup, lactitol, erythritol, isomalt and hydrogenated starch hydrolysates (HSH). Products with sugar alcohols are often labeled “sugar free.” Large amounts of sugar alcohols may cause bloating, gas or diarrhea. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards do not allow foods or beverages with these ingredients. For more information, see “Connecticut Nutrition Standards” and “nonnutritive sweeteners” in this section.

**sugars:** See “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates” in this section.

**total sugars:** All sources of sugars including naturally occurring (e.g., fruits, vegetables and milk) and added (e.g., brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar and syrup). For more information, see “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates” in this section.

**trans fat:** A type of saturated (solid) fat that increases the risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Like saturated fats, trans fats raise “bad” low-density lipoproteins (LDL) cholesterol. However, unlike saturated fats, they also decrease “good” high-density lipoproteins (HDL) cholesterol. Small amounts of trans fats occur naturally in some foods of animal origin, e.g., dairy products, beef and lamb. However, most trans fats in the American diet are artificially made as the result of “hydrogenation,” a process where liquid vegetable oils are made into a solid (saturated) fat. Trans fats are used by manufacturers to increase shelf life and enhance the flavor and texture of food products. They are found in processed foods made with partially hydrogenated oils such as cakes, cookies, crackers, snack chips, fried foods and margarine. For more information, see “partially hydrogenated oils” in this section.

**whole foods:** Foods that are unprocessed or minimally processed and do not contain added ingredients, such as fat, sugars or sodium.

**whole fruits and vegetables:** : Fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables that are unprocessed or minimally processed and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars or sodium.

**whole-grain flour:** Flour made by grinding the entire whole-grain kernel, including the bran, germ and endosperm. If a flour or meal does not contain all parts of the grain, it is not whole grain, e.g., degermed corn, milled rice and wheat flour.

**whole grains:** Grains that consist of the entire kernel, including the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran and the germ. All grains start out as whole grains, but many are processed to remove the bran and germ, which also removes many of the nutrients. Whole grains are nutrient rich, containing vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants and health-enhancing phytonutrients such as lignans and flavonoids. Examples of whole grains include whole wheat, whole oats, oatmeal, whole-grain cornmeal, brown rice, whole rye, whole barley, wild rice, buckwheat and bulgur (cracked wheat). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [\*Identifying Whole Grains\*](#).

**whole grain-rich:** Whole grain-rich products must contain at least 50 percent whole grains, any other grain ingredients must be enriched and any noncreditable grains must be less than two percent ( $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce equivalent) of the product formula. To comply with this limit, the combined total of all noncreditable grains in one serving of the product cannot exceed 3.99 grams for groups A-G (baked goods) or 6.99 grams for groups H (cereal grains) and I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals) of the USDA ounce equivalents chart. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Criteria for Whole Grain-rich Foods*, and section 2 the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.

## Appendix

### Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) for School Foods and Beverages

**Section 10-215a.** Nonpublic school and nonprofit agency participation in feeding programs. Nonpublic schools and nonprofit agencies may participate in the school breakfast, lunch and other feeding programs provided in sections 10-215 to 10-215b under such regulations as may be promulgated by the State Board of Education in conformance with said sections and under the federal laws governing said programs, except that such schools, other than the endowed academies approved pursuant to section 10-34, and agencies shall not be eligible for the funding described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-215b.

**Section 10-215b.** Duties of State Board of Education re feeding programs. (a) The State Board of Education is authorized to expend in each fiscal year an amount equal to (1) the money required pursuant to the matching requirements of said federal laws and shall disburse the same in accordance with said laws, and (2) ten cents per lunch served in the prior school year in accordance with said laws by any local or regional board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system or governing authority of a state charter school, interdistrict magnet school or endowed academy approved pursuant to section 10-34 that participates in the National School Lunch Program and certifies pursuant to section 10-215f that the nutrition standards established by the Department of Education pursuant to section 10-215e shall be met.

(b) The State Board of Education shall prescribe the manner and time of application by such board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system, such governing authority or controlling authority of the nonpublic schools for such funds, provided such application shall include the certification that any funds received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be used for the program approved. The State Board of Education shall determine the eligibility of the applicant to receive such grants pursuant to regulations provided in subsection (c) of this section and shall certify to the Comptroller the amount of the grant for which the board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system, the governing authority or the controlling authority of a nonpublic school is eligible. Upon receipt of such certification, the Comptroller shall draw an order on the Treasurer in the amount, at the time and to the payee so certified.

(c) The State Board of Education may adopt such regulations as may be necessary in implementing sections 10-215 to 10-215b, inclusive.

(d) The Commissioner of Education shall establish a procedure for monitoring compliance by boards of education, the regional vocational-technical school system, or governing authorities with certifications submitted in accordance with section 10-215f and may adjust grant amounts pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section based on failure to comply with said certification.

**Section 10-215e.** Nutrition standards for food that is not part of lunch or breakfast program. Not later than August 1, 2006, and January first of each year thereafter, the Department of Education shall publish a set of nutrition standards for food items offered for sale to students at schools. Such standards shall not apply to food sold as part of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program unless such items are purchased separately from a school lunch or breakfast that is reimbursable under such program.

The C.G.S. related to foods and beverages are located at [www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap169.htm) and [www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap170.htm).

### C.G.S. for School Foods and Beverages continued

**Section 10-215f.** Certification that food meets nutrition standards. (a) Each local and regional board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system, and the governing authority for each state charter school, interdistrict magnet school and endowed academy approved pursuant to section 10-34 that participates in the National School Lunch Program shall certify in its annual application to the Department of Education for school lunch funding whether, during the school year for which such application is submitted, all food items made available for sale to students in schools under its jurisdiction and not exempted from the nutrition standards published by the Department of Education pursuant to section 10-215e will meet said standards. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, such certification shall include food not exempted from said nutrition standards and offered for sale to students at all times, and from all sources, including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises, whether or not school sponsored.

(b) Each board of education, the regional vocational-technical school system and each governing authority that certifies pursuant to this section compliance with the department's nutrition standards for food may exclude from such certification the sale to students of food items that do not meet such standards, provided (1) such sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) such sale is at the location of such event, and (3) such food is not sold from a vending machine or school store.

**Section 10-221p.** Boards to make available for purchase nutritious and low-fat foods. Each local and regional board of education and governing authority for each state charter school, interdistrict magnet school and endowed academy approved pursuant to section 10-34, shall make available in the schools under its jurisdiction for purchase by students enrolled in such schools nutritious and low-fat foods, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit at all times when food is available for purchase by students in such schools during the regular school day.

**Section 10-221q.** Sale of beverages. (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this section, each local and regional board of education and the governing authority for each state charter school, interdistrict magnet school and endowed academy approved pursuant to section 10-34, shall permit at schools under its jurisdiction the sale of only the following beverages to students from any source, including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fund-raising activities on school premises, whether or not school sponsored: (1) Milk that may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners and no more than four grams of sugar per ounce, (2) nondairy milks such as soy or rice milk, which may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners, no more than four grams of sugar per ounce, no more than thirty-five per cent of calories from fat per portion and no more than ten per cent of calories from saturated fat per portion, (3) one hundred per cent fruit juice, vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners, (4) beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners, and (5) water, which may be flavored but contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine. Portion sizes of beverages, other than water as described in subdivision (5) of this subsection, that are offered for sale pursuant to this subsection shall not exceed twelve ounces.

(b) Each such board of education or governing authority may permit at schools under its jurisdiction, the sale to students of beverages that are not listed in subsection (a) of this section, provided (1) such sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) such sale is at the location of such event, and (3) such beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.